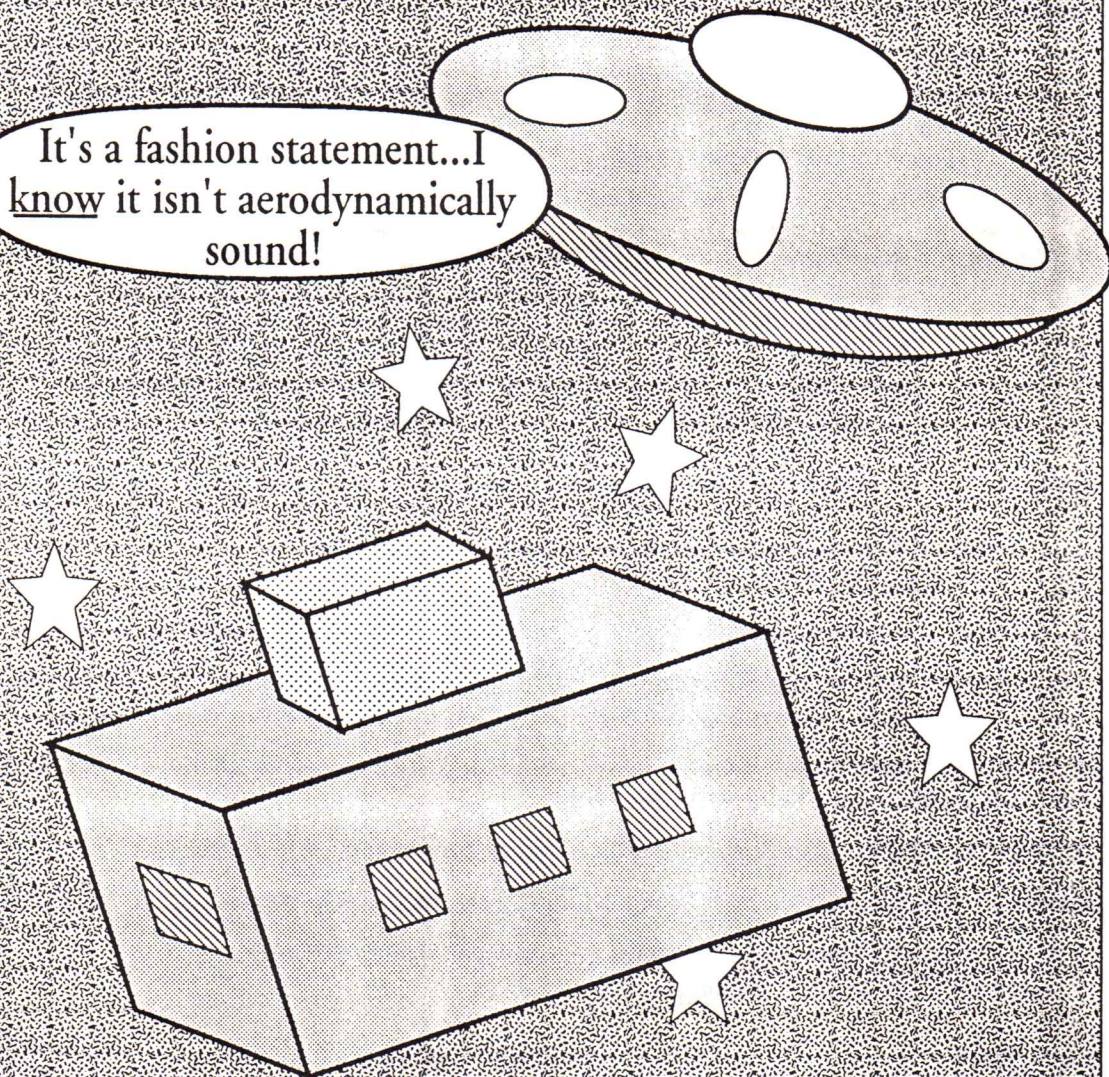


# THYME

It's a fashion statement...I know it isn't aerodynamically sound!



#92

July 1993

The Australasian SF News Magazine

## Contributors

Merv Binns, Terry Frost, Beverley Hope, Alan Stewart, Lin Wolfe

Paul Ewins	4 Coval Court, Vermont South, Victoria, 3133
Donna Heenan	PO Box 99, Bayswater, Victoria, 3153
Richard Hryckiewicz	PO Box 21, Laverton, Victoria, 3028
Lindsay Jamieson	6/17 Stillman Street, Richmond, Victoria, 3121
Mark (Rocky) Lawson	9/90 Bay Rd, Waverton, NSW, 2060
Mark Loney	Washington Bag, Locked Bag 40, Queen Victoria Terrace, ACT 2600
LynC	PO Box 4024, University of Melbourne, Parkville, Victoria, 3052
Karen Pender-Gunn	PO Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria, 3130
Nick Price	PO Box 18072, 45 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria, 3000
Karen Small	37 Chaucer Street, Moonee Ponds, Victoria, 3039

## Art Credits

Cover	Thyme	Sheryl Birkhead	23629 Woodfield Rd, Gaithersburg MD 20882 USA
2	Thyme	Ian Gunn	PO Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria, 3130
5	Thyme	Bill Rotsler	17909 Lull Street, Reseda, CA 91335 USA
6	Thyme	Dennis Callegari	159 Kilby Road, Kew East, Victoria, 3102
2	ASFN	Craig Hilton	PO Box 430, Collie, WA 6225

Changes of Address:	Ron Clarke	PO Box K940, Haymarket, NSW 2000
	Galaxy Bookshop	222 Clarence Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
	Sue Peukert	42 Harris Road, Vale Park, SA 5070
	Nick Price	PO Box 18072, 45 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic, 3000
	Dick Smith & Leah Zeldes-Smith	410 West Willow Road, Prospect Heights, IL 60070-1250 USA

Returned Thymes. If anyone has a more up to date address for the following I'd appreciate it.

J R Madden POB 18610-A, Uni Station, Baton Rouge LA 70893 USA  
 Kerrie Hanlon PO Box 333, Drumoyne NSW 2047

Address conventions: Unless specifically stated otherwise, all addresses published are Australian.

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Editorial Address: Thyme, PO Box 222, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria, 3005, AUSTRALIA

Email: Alan=Stewart@Chem\_Eng2%UNIMELB@muwaye.unimelb.EDU.AU  
 Phone: Home (03) 429 8354 Business (03) 344 4035

## Fanimals

## STICKY BEAKS

BY Ian Gunn 593



## News

Rumors from Defcon indicate that the right to host the 1995 Australasian SF Media Convention has not been awarded, and will be decided upon at Constantinople. The costuming guidelines are apparently no longer part of the Constitution. The Doomsday Book (equivalent of the Australian SF Natcon's gavel) was not handed over at the Closing Ceremony.

Guest of Honor changes mean that **Mary Tamm** will now be GoH at Whovention II - Control, 9-11 July, and **David Gerrold** will be featured at Cupcon, 29-31 October.

Australia in '99 presupporting memberships are now available for \$10 from PO Box 99, Bayswater, Victoria, 3153. Join now and receive a badge from our first collectible set.

## People

**Jessica Ann Tilley** was welcomed by proud parents **Carol** and **Glen** at 4.45 am Friday 28 May. Arriving at this time, and at 6 lb 11 oz, meant **Marion MacNally** won the baby sweepstakes.

**Tom** and **Claire Marwede** welcomed a son **David Kyle Thomas** at 2.50 pm on June 24, at 6 lb 14 oz.

A big welcome to **Liam David Cavell** for **Beverley Hope** on 6 July, weighing in at 9 lb 14 oz.

**Lucy Sussex** has been nominated as one of the judges for the 1994 Tiptree Memorial Award.

The fannish engagement of **Lin Wolfe** and **Roman Orszanski** is officially ended, they've both gone on to pursue other interests.

Congratulations to New Zealand fen **Keith Smith** and **Jaquie Dunford** who were married in Auckland on May 1.

After a week in hospital with serious heart problems, **Lester del Rey** died of a massive heart attack on 10 May, aged 77 years.

**Avram Davidson** died of diabetes related complications in Seattle on 8 May. He had been ill for a long time and spent the last few years in a Veteran's Administration Hospital.

Local fan **Jodi Willis** received the Order of Australia award in the Queen's Birthday honor list for services to sport. This was recognition for the gold medal she won at the Paralympics in Barcelona last year.

Fannish appearances on *Jeopardy* continued with **Dennis Callegari** appearing in the episode broadcast on Friday July 2. Dennis came second to the sixth

'Super Champ', and would have won if the champ hadn't have known the Final Jeopardy question of what part of the body trichology dealt with (hair). He didn't get to keep his score of \$10 200, but won a weekend for two at Novotel, Darling Harbor, Sydney. Dennis only gave two wrong answers, and seemed to be beaten on the buzzer by the champion.

## Fan Funds

The **GUFF** Race is on again! Nominees are called to go from Australia to Intersection, Glasgow, in 1995. Folks interested need to get their nominations (three Australian, two European) and platforms, along with a \$5 "bond" and promise that should they win, barring acts of God, they'll attend to one of the administrators [**Roman Orszanski** PO Box 131, Marden, SA 5070, or **Eva Hauser** in Prague]. The race will be run over the next eighteen months and the winner announced in January 1995.

**Alan Stewart** has officially handed the position of Australian Administrator of FFANZ over to **Ian Gunn** and **Karen Pender-Gunn** upon their return to Australia. The Fund had a balance of \$565.27 at the time, and this has since increased through sales of Alan's Trip Report FFANZ Across the Water which is available from the administrators for \$5 (includes postage, surface rate to overseas). The New Zealand Administrator, **Rex Thompson**, has also produced a Trip Report, From the Prying FFANZ Into the Foyer, also available for \$5. Rex's FFANZ Focus had a recent issue in May, and Alan's last FFANZ News bulletin came out in June.

Nominations for the 1994 Race to bring a New Zealand fan across for Constantinople '94 are currently open and close **July 31**. Prospective candidates require written nominations from one New Zealand and one Australian nominator, and must supply a written acceptance and platform of not more than 100 words, a non-refundable deposit of \$10 and promise, barring acts of God, to attend the Convention and then Administer the New Zealand FFANZ Fund until such a time as their successor has been selected. A Trip Report must also be produced. Voting will close **November 30**.

Current Administrators: Ian Gunn and Karen Pender-Gunn, PO Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria, 3130; Rex Thompson, PO Box 333, Dunedin, New Zealand.

## Awards

### 1993 Academy Awards

Best make-up *Bram Stoker's Dracula*

Best sound effects *Bram Stoker's Dracula*

Best costume design *Bram Stoker's Dracula*

Best original score *Aladdin*

Best original song 'Whole New World' (*Aladdin*)

Voting forms for the 1993 Double Gamma Awards (Dr Who) are now out and combine nomination and voting in one hit!

### 1993 New Zealand SF & F Awards

#### Best general fanzine

Timestreams Edited by Chris Mander.

#### Best Clubzine

Time/Space Visualiser Edited Felicity & Paul Scoones.

#### Best Writer

Jon Preddle

#### Best Artist

Warwick Gray

#### Special Achievement

Lana Brown

(Thanks Linnette Horne)

Clarinet Communications is offering for sale Hugo and Nebula Anthology 1993, a CD-ROM containing all the Hugo nominated fiction, all the Nebula nominated short fiction, the Hugo nominated artworks and artists, samples of Hugo nominated fan writing, fanzines, fan art and much much more. Included on the CD-ROM are photos of authors, bibliographies, author readings by the author, and a hypertext edition of Vernor Vinge's A Fire Upon the Deep with Vinge's own annotations. For more information contact info-sf@clarinet.com.

### 1993 Australasian SF Media Awards (ASFMA's)

#### Best Fan Newsletter

Ethel the Aardvark Edited by Alan Stewart, Paul Ewins

#### Best Fan Writer

Hazel Naird

The remaining categories were not voted on as they were deemed 'under nominated' as per the ASFMA rules in the constitution. An early ballot, which also indicated first past the post voting as well as the other categories, was withdrawn.

(Thanks Linnette Horne)

### 1993 Grammy Awards

The film *Beauty and the Beast* picked up the following:

- Best pop vocal performance duo or group
- Best pop instrumental performance
- Best album for children
- Best instrumental composition written for motion picture or television
- Best song written specifically for motion picture or television

### 1993 New Zealand Film and Television Awards

The film *Brain Dead* won the following:

Best film

Best director (Peter Jackson)

Best male dramatic performance (Tim Balme)

Best screenplay (Peter Jackson/Stephen Sinclair/  
Frances Walsh)

Best contribution to design (Richard Taylor -  
special effects)

(Thanks Cry Havoc)

### TV and Film

BBC Audio will be recording a new adventure *The Paradise of Death* starring Jon Pertwee from a script by Barry Letts. It will consist of five episodes and will be broadcast by BBC 5 in August-September.

(Black Light)

The next *Star Wars* movie, the 'first' in the series, is tentatively slated for release in 1997 on the 20th Anniversary of the original movie's release.

BBC Enterprises has given the go ahead for the production of a *Doctor Who* 30th Anniversary Special. Planned to feature all current living Doctors, it will hopefully premiere worldwide in November.

(Data Extract)

### Writing and Publishers

Greg Egan's first novel, An Unusual Angle, is still available from Bruce Gillespie (Norstrilia Press), C/- GPO Box 5195AA, Melbourne, Victoria, 3001. It is available in trade pb for \$14.95 and a limited supply of hc for \$24.95 (plus postage overseas).

The New England SF Association (NESFA) is producing a series of books under the imprint 'NESFA's Choice' aimed at bringing back into print out-of-print authors. The first book in the series was The Best of James Schmitz. The second book is The Rediscovery of Man: The Complete Short Fiction of Cordwainer Smith which includes *Himself in Anarchon* (which was scheduled to appear in The Last Dangerous Visions) and *War No. 81-Q*, a complete rewrite of his first story. It should be available now. Send suggestions for future collections to lmann@vineland.pubs.stratus.com or mail to NESFA, Box 809, Framingham, MA 01701 USA, which is also the address for orders.

Squashed Armadillocon, written by Paul T Riddell, illustrated by Ernest Hogan, which tries to emulate Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas and covers Japanese pornography and the ghost of L Ron Hubbard, among other things, according to a publicity blurb, is now available from Hypatia Press, 360 West 1st, Eugene, Oregon, 97401, USA for \$US 12.95.

## Con Report

by Paul Ewins

Swancon 18 - 1993 Australian National SF Convention

The Age 'Good Weekend' on 3 July 1993 featured the anthology Terror Australis, edited by **Leigh Blackmore**, and published by Hodder & Stoughton. The almost four page spread, titled 'Fear Dinkum' included photos of Leigh, **Terry Dowling** (in a Grace Bros dressing gown) and **Sheila Hatherley**.

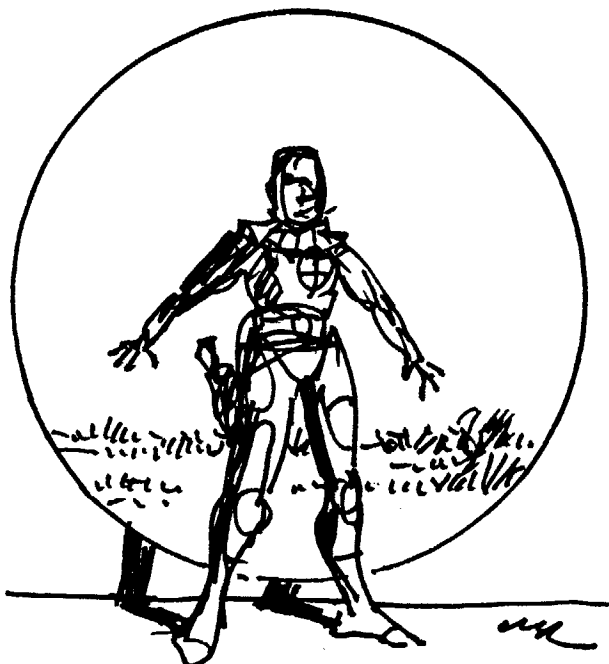
**Terry Dowling** and **Van Ikin** are rumored to be working on a Best Australian SF collection for Hodder & Stoughton.

Autographed copies of **Lyn McConchie's** short story collection Farming Daze by Elizabeth Underwood are available from Lyn, Farside farm, R.D. Norsewood, New Zealand for \$NZ 21, or from Jean Weber, 7 Nicoll Avenue, Ryde, NSW, 2112 for \$A 16.

In honor of **Baird Searles**, who died on March 22 of lymphatic cancer, the Baird Searles Award for young writers has been established in conjunction with the Isaac Asimov Award for the best science fiction or fantasy story by a full-time undergraduate. The Searles Award will be limited to college students who are under 21. Donations towards the Baird Searles Award Fund can be sent to Martin Last, 1393 Rue La Fontaine, Montreal, Quebec, H2L 1T6, Canada.

(Thanks Warp, Canada)

Leigh Blackmore has out of print Arkham House and small press books for sale. Authors include Lovecraft. Also various UFO and cinema related materials. Contact him on [02] 818 2788 (w), [02] 560 9054 (ah).



Terry Pratchett and Robert Jordan were the international GoHs at Swancon, but I'm not going to write about them. I had heard Terry talk at the MSFC a year ago so I didn't really want to hear the same spiel again, and as I had left my copy of Conan the XXXXXXXX at home and couldn't get it autographed I didn't bother with Robert Jordan either. My lack of interest in the guests wasn't the fault of the committee, on the contrary I thought they were reasonable choices, it's just that I have found that it is the fans that I prefer to see at cons and the major reason for travelling interstate is the opportunity to see old friends and make new ones, not to gawp at the big names.

Swancon 18, much like 17 before it, seemed to have something in it for everyone. This was borne out by the much larger than expected attendance, which was around the 400 mark. By and large the committee seems to have provided a balanced program that catered for everyone from the Natcon regulars to the local Japanimation fans.

My personal preference is for the fun, social items and there was a good range of these to choose from. Improvisation Games (aka Theatre Sports) was reasonably well attended with four or five teams fighting it out in front of a large audience. Although there are a lot of laughs to be had as a spectator, believe me, it's much more fun when you're actually up there doing it. Spaceship Building saw an even bigger turn out than last year as around eight teams tried to turn piles of junk into model spaceships and then try and give a credible explanation to the judges of the nature and purpose of their ships. There were other social activities arranged as well; a cocktail party, the ice cream social, a disco and there were a few room parties running so generally there was plenty of opportunity to mix and meet new people.

The masquerade had one of the highest turnouts of entrants I have ever seen with approximately thirty acts. Both costumes and acts ranged from inspired to abysmal, but everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and nobody was taking it too seriously. Once again, Nick Stathopoulos was MC and kept the audience engaged between acts with various anecdotes from his trips overseas. This is the way a masquerade should be, lots of entrants with a range of costume styles and influences and a reasonable number of comic acts thrown in to keep people laughing.

There have been a few complaints about the venue and I must agree with the one about food. On being told that I had to book 24 hours in advance to have a

meal at the bistro with no choice of what I would be eating I promptly lost interest in that idea. Most of the meals I had at the con were either take-aways or leftover take-aways. In fact the only good meal I had for the entire con was when I went into the Perth CBD with a couple of friends to look at a shop. The Pizza Banquet was the same shambles as last year; there must be a good way to run this although I must admit I can't think of one. On reflection I seem to remember existing on cold pizza, toast and chocolate. Maybe next time the venue will be near a few decent restaurants. Other than that I couldn't really fault the place, it was clean and comfortable and was big enough for the expected size of the con.

On the more serious side the whole conduct of the Ditmars was a shambles and the Business Meeting saw the usual rubbish talked about once site selection for 1995 had been dealt with. The bright spot of the Business Meeting was the selection of Tasmania as the site for the 1995 Natcon. Despite the last minute organisation of the bid it was well prepared and gives the impression of a con that will be a success. Another negative impression of Swancon was that of a few of the guests working very hard for very little thanks. One of the things that I really missed was an art show - a strange omission when your fan GoH is an artist. Craig Hilton's works were hung from a string in the Hucksters' room - not exactly the best of displays.

Overall Swancon 18 was every bit as good as Swancon 17, but not better which is to say that it was a success. Once again I thoroughly enjoyed myself and I would heartily recommend it to anybody. As a Natcon, however, I would say that Swancon 18 was much less successful, with the Ditmar shambles leaving a sour taste in the mouths of many.

## Film Review

by Mark (Rocky) Lawson

### BLADE RUNNER REVISITED

The director's version of one of my favourite films, Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*, has received a lot of publicity as being a noticeably different film from the version originally released in the early 80s. Be warned - it's hype. I recently saw the director's version in Sydney (I understand that it has yet to arrive in Melbourne), and noticed no substantial difference. There are a few minor changes. There is no voice over at the beginning or end and there are a few extra scenes, one or two of which give additional emphasis to the possibility that Dekker (the Blade Runner) might himself be one of the replicants he is supposed to be eliminating.

The ending is also cut short by a minute or so - it is not clear where Dekker and the female replicant go to after they leave his apartment for the last time - and

on reflection I prefer the director's ending. In one additional, brief scene Dekker dreams of a unicorn and just seconds before the end of the film he picks up a Origami figure of a Unicorn folded by one of the other Blade Runners. The implication is that his superiors knew that the female replicant was in Dekker's apartment and, indirectly, that they knew about his dreams. Ergo his memories had been implanted.

Thin, I know, but for various reason I prefer to believe that it's what Ridley Scott intended to imply. For I only spotted the Unicorn connection because I had read it in a review - the same review which insisted that the director's version of *Blade Runner* was sufficiently different to be worth re-releasing. The only place any journalist could have obtained such rubbish was from the distributor's press release, which probably also contained the bit about the Unicorn, and as the reference seems too far-fetched to invent it must be true and have come from the original film documentation - see. So much for logic.

Anyway, as I and five others I spoke to about the film agree, there is no major difference between the director's version and the original. The director's version is, perhaps, a shade better. But *Blade Runner* is still an excellent film, worth seeing again on the big screen, and I understand that Sydneysiders have been packing out the re-release. The distributors have even shifted the film from a suburban theatre to a city cinema to accommodate the crowds. This shows what hype will do. So does anyone know when *Jurassic Park* is coming out?



## Article

by Mark (Rocky) Lawson

TIME TRAVEL IN SF or: Back To The 70s.

The popular SF theme of time travel and all its attendant consequences has always puzzled me. As someone who remains spiritually in the 70s I can never understand the desire of writers to shift their characters about between decades, if not centuries. I freely admit that the 70s had its disadvantages - the Bee Gees come to mind - but desert boots were still in fashion; my Datsun 120Y (only recently disposed of) was comparatively new; and I could still be described as young. Not that I ever really understood the decade. In fact I only watched *The Film of the 70s*, *Saturday Night Fever*, all the way through early this decade. I take time to adjust. But just as I finally settle in, the world has moved on 20 years and Madonna has bared all. Thus I practice a form of time travel, but not the way it is depicted in a swag of films to be discussed here - the two Terminator films, and the Back To The Future trilogy.

I liked all five films but judging by my own peculiar criteria of historical truth in science fiction, and despite *Terminator II* being wildly over the top, the Terminator series gets my vote as the most likely version of history. My reasons for giving a nod to Arnold Schwarzenegger and various friends involve the likely nature of time and time travel, which has been the subject of much theoretical and some practical exploration. For time travel, as in skipping back a few decades rather than inching forward as we all do, is apparently theoretically possible. If the space time of general relativity is sufficiently distorted, so the theorists say, a trip in space will also take the traveller back in time. The required distortion is far from easy to achieve. My vague memory of a speculative article in *New Scientist* on this point, which I read in the early 80s, is that such a time machine required a rotating neutron star, or equivalent, to work. That requirement promptly disposes of one argument against time travel. If such travel was theoretically possible why are we not now inundated with tourists from 2020s pining for the good ol' 90s? Future civilisations may be able to travel in time but the immense difficulty of such travel, even for civilisations with all-digital interactive pay TV, will ensure that it is undertaken only on very, very special or desperate occasions.

Difficult or not time travel still creates paradoxes. Namely, if a traveller goes back in time and kills his (her) own parents before his birth, then how can that person exist in the first place? Surprisingly there are scientists who have little better to do than look at paradoxes raised by theoretical speculations about the consequences of artificially-induced distortions in space-time and, equally surprisingly, there is a theoretical way around the paradox. A don at Wolfson

College in Oxford (David Deutsch), whose work is described in a recent article in *New Scientist* (Time travel without the paradoxes, March 28, page 15), says he has resolved the problem by reviving, via quantum mechanics, the old idea of parallel universes. In the sub-molecular world of quantum mechanics everything is fuzzy. Position and momentum can never be nailed down exactly; there is always a degree of uncertainty and so on. Deutsch says this fuzziness can be explained by having a series of parallel universes, each with a slightly different version of particle interaction.

Extending that concept, in one bound, to the closed timelike curves (CTCs) possible in general relativity, Deutsch theorises that anyone travelling back in time will also move to a slightly different universe. The traveller could then kill his (her, its) grandparents without making any difference to the universe from whence he came. There would, almost certainly, be no way back to the original universe. Of course, one should not pay too much attention to the theory rather simplistically explained above. General relativity and quantum mechanics are both very successful theories but, after decades of trying, scientists have been unable to match up the two. Gravity, tolerably well explained by curvature in space-time, cannot be made to fit into the theory unifying the other forces - the strong, weak and electromagnetic forces. Something is missing, and with Cosmology running into all sorts of problems at the moment it would be wise not to pay much attention to solutions to problems that do not exist, outside SF.

None the less, the above model is about the best anyone is ever going to get for time travel, and that model is quite different from the depiction of time in the otherwise quite entertaining Back To the Future series. In those films the McFly hero zips back and forth changing events and sees his own life altered as a result. The films thus see time as a stream of events that is instantaneously re-ordered when one part of the sequence is altered. Newspaper headlines announcing a particular event fade away when the events are changed, and so on. Unlikely. In contrast, the contestants in the first Terminator film, android Arnie and his human adversary Sergeant Kyle, have no means of getting back to their own time, whatever may come of their efforts to kill-save Sarah Connor, the mother of the leader who saves the humans from extinction. There is even some indication that the result is not relevant to the universe from whence the pair came. Kyle makes a reference to "one possible future", when trying to convince the police he is not a loonie.

There is also a thread of logic joining the first and second films. At the end of *Terminator*, Sarah survives but becomes pregnant to Kyle who dies protecting her and is motivated to turn herself into a rather dangerous survivalist. In addition, various bits of the

original android fall into the hands of talented researchers. Events are thus remolded in a parallel but quite separate time continuum in which both sides are able to field much improved weapons for the second round. In *Terminator II* the humans are able to send back an Arnie-type android, one step up on the previous human, while the machine intelligence of the future sends a much better model - a smart-metal android that can mould itself into almost anything it wants and is only slowed down a little by being smashed to pieces. The resulting fun 'n games is, as I said, over the top but one result is that the scientist who inadvertently creates the machine master-intelligence which causes all the trouble in the future is killed and the android bits left over from the first film are destroyed. One small loose end from all this is where, if all the universes are separate, the father of the human leader came from in the first place. That part does not quite fit into the theory but perhaps the mother did not quite tell the truth to her son the first time around.

"Your father came from the future, son."

"Sure mum."

Whatever the underlying truth of that detail the events of *Terminator II*, according to the above theory, pushed events into a third, parallel but quite separate universe. This time the balance may have shifted greatly in favour of the humans, but the producers of *Terminator III* may not see it that way. For there must be a sequel somewhere in the works. The lure of future box office takings would be too great for the film industry to ignore. As Arnie himself would say: "I'll be back."

## Film Review

by Mark Loney

### Jurassic Shark

The opening scene of *Jurassic Park*, the latest blockbuster movie from the man who brought you *Jaws* all those years ago, was certainly full of Spielberg cliches. It was night-time, there were bright lights everywhere but, somehow, they managed to obscure rather than illuminate and, similarly, the sound track was mixed to be a babble rather than a babel fish. And, of course, something goes horribly wrong because an obvious and basic precaution wasn't taken and... but rather than digress into a discussion of the plot, which is pretty lame if the truth be told (and I absolutely forswear spending any time on the ludicrous 'Married without Children' subplot), I'd rather spend some time talking about the special effects.

After all, is there anyone on the planet that doesn't know that *Jurassic Park* is about dinosaurs breaking out of the theme park? The main issue is, do they look real? The answer is, yes and no. Having carefully avoided most of the propaganda about

*Jurassic Park*, I could be completely wrong in my supposition that dinosaurs in the film are either models (close-ups and some middle distance shots) or fractal based animations (long shots and the remaining middle shots). The first fractal based animations are a flock (?) of brontosaurus as seen by the New Zealand guy from *Dead Calm*. And they're pretty good... they move like real animals, they look like real animals and, not to put to fine a point on it, I was prepared to believe that brontosauri looked like that. The first problem was that, subtly, they didn't seem to belong in the live action scene - the play of sun and shadow on their hides wasn't quite right for where they were supposed to be. What you see is a modern version of the back-projection scene in old black and white movies - it looks pretty good but you just know that the car that they're sitting in isn't really in Paris.

The second problem was the behaviour of our intrepid Royal Australian Navy captain (moonlighting as a paleontologist in an attempt to get over his disastrous pleasure cruise with Nicole [she, of course, divorced him, qualified as a brain surgeon and married Tom Cruise]). I contend that any sane and reasonable person, when confronted by a dozen or so creatures weighing 50 or 60 tons that, because of their very long necks, have their very small brains an even longer distance away from their very large feet, would run (or drive) away. I also contend that anyone who ambles up to the nearest limb of the nearest very large dinosaur deserves to be crushed underfoot like an ant. But, somehow, our hero escaped that particular fate.

A similar piece of ludicrousness occurs later in the movie. Our hero is sleeping in a tree with a young boy and a young girl (don't ask). Their slumber is disturbed by a brontosaurus deciding to eat their tree for breakfast. Me, I'd jump. My bet is that a creature with a head the size of my body might not be able to discriminate between me and the tasty bunches of leaves normally found in trees. Our hero? Well he tells his charges to treat the high capacity mobile stomach intake like a cow. So they say things like 'Here pussy pussy' and try and pat it on the nose. (At this point in the movie, it is probably worth explaining, we have bad (carnivorous) dinosaurs and we have good (herbivorous) dinosaurs. The moral position of omnivorous dinosaurs isn't explained.)

By now you might be wondering, quite legitimately, just what did I think of *Jurassic Park*? The answer is, quibbles aside, that it's a very good special effects movie and worth seeing for those special effects alone. The plot is forgettable and is pushed and prodded along with typical Spielberg arrogance (one dimensional bad guy, one dimensional cute kiddies, one dimensional crazed capitalist and so on). But the model dinosaurs are very convincing and, in a number of scenes, genuinely frightening. I jumped - and I wasn't even in a tree. And for all of us who thought



*Edge of Darkness* was one of the best British mini-series for a long time, our apostle of the black flowers is reincarnated as a big game hunter with astonishingly large upper leg muscles. But are they big enough to defeat velocoraptor? I guess that you'll have to pay the admission price to find that out.

**Have Ball,  
Will Travel!**  
a column by  
Terry Frost

Thyme's esteemed editor, part-time poet and Scrabble whiz Alan Stewart has, to use an abhorrent neologism, tasked me to waffle the variations on the subject of Convention Guests of Honor. They are expensive beasts, aren't they, especially the imported variety. Thousands of dollars are spent to import them and the details are arranged years in advance. The problem is that in too many cases no more care is taken with their selection than would be taken in picking a shirt from a bargain bin in K-Mart. Too often the concom considers the GoH they'd like at the expense (literally) of who the punters would like. Of course, you can't always get first choice but some of the second string selections have been ludicrous.

Looking back, Australian conventions have really had a mixed bag of Guests of Honor. Back in 1982 there was an overseas GoH who for all his evocative and powerful writing was somewhat reminiscent of Jabba the Hutt. A con in Brisbane got some guy who looked good standing behind Ricardo Montalban in *Star Trek II* and turned up at the con for almost exactly the same number of minutes as he had screen time in that movie. Literary fandom has it easier than media which limits itself to one program or film series in a lot of cases...to its detriment.

A few observations on Guests of Honour:

1) If they're from overseas, professional and at all related to the thespic arts, there's a layer of concom people and media fen forming a complete cordon sanitaire around them. Also, in most cases, there are suture marks behind their ears from the nip and tuck jobs of Californian surgeons.

2) If they're SF authors, some kind of SMOF will be seen chumming around them. Around 20% of GoHs will be looking to score some dope, another 20% will be looking to just plain score and most of the rest are women and/or Australian authors with an exception or two.

3) If Starwalking gets them, they'll be a librarian, or a producer or the guy who trims George Lucas' beard at the Skywalker ranch who'll show up with a bushel bag of facial hair for auctioning off. It ain't who they are to this mob, it's what toys they bring with them.

Come on, guys! Is Mark Hamill going to strike you dead with a light-sabre if you look further afield for people to spend five or ten kilobucks on? Given the glut of (usually stupid) TV and cinema SF and Fantasy that rains toads and fish on the global media village, surely you can find some geezer more wondrous to schlep half way around the bloody planet than a bloody film archivist? But perhaps this isn't possible. I get the impression that there are about a hundred and three different media SF clubs in the Melbourne metropolitan area. Given this density there may be a treaty in place that forbids poaching of Guests of Honor from other TV shows or movie series than those specifically mentioned in the club charter. The last thing one wants to see in media fandom is calls for ethnic cleansing between Stellar Police Action fans and the devotees of Scarlet Midget.

But the problem usually isn't the Guest, it's the punters that get let through the front door, or the people who let them in. Like the guy who walked up to a GoH who was engaged in a solitary act of micturition and began quizzing him on secondary archetypes and semiotic morphology in his works. (No myth this one: I was there shaking my one hose at the stainless steel at the time). Or the folks of limited cerebral software who ask dumb questions like "Did you ever do wind-tunnel tests on your dragons before you had them lifting pregnant ladies across continents and can you scoop the brains out of them if they crash and read them like a black box flight recorder?". We all know the type. They're the ones who sit next to you at room parties and, depending on your chromosomes, start talking about the set design in *Blake's 7* or look unerringly at your tits. (When will these guys learn that you don't admire breasts unless you're asked to or you're wearing dark sunglasses and the owner can't see your eyes).

My favorite personal Guests of Honor are the ones who don't cater to the expectation of the punters. The people like George Turner and Harlan Ellison who kidney punch our foolish beliefs and coddled myths and, even when they're wrong, make us so briefly re-examine our assumptions about the nature of Nature. I like Guests of Honor who tell us something new and important, who stimulate our mind instead of just tickling your fancies. Granted, this is an unpopular view, especially with a large number of concoms who either bring out the same people time and again or find the lowest common denominator and get his/her understudy. (The above paragraph doesn't relate to Constantinople who listened to my advice long ago regarding Guests of Honor).

## Thyme LoCs

Sheryl Birkhead  
23629 Woodfield Rd  
Gaithersburg MD 20882 USA

I have Thyme #90, nice Gunn cover, the mad scientist strikes again in the realm of haute (or is that hot ?) cuisine.

I saw *Abyss* (but not *Leviathan*) and say it was good except the ending was rather abrupt and rushed. *Abyss* also (to my knowledge) is the first to use the "bleeding" special effect - I'm not certain "morphing" is the proper term - but that is what the technique became. It seemed as if the movie was painstakingly done up to about the last fifteen minutes then rushed to end it.

I haven't read the books listed/reviewed except I'm in the middle of Whatdunits and agree with Nick Price's assessment but I'd say the stories (as a whole, as far as I've read) are better than average although not consistently of the same calibre. I really enjoy the mystery aspect and hope there are sequels in the same line.

Some of Scholz's work is "rather" dark, but the execution looks smooth and clean although the littlest figures are a bit difficult to see details clearly. I don't claim to understand Ian Gunn's *Space Time Buccaneers* but it is fun trying to figure it out. In Thyme #91 I like the Tortorici piece on page 3. Ian and Karen introduced me to Mail Art, but I haven't pursued it though it looks like a lot of fun. A shame that page couldn't be in color, I wonder how colorful it was ?

I wish I subbed to one of the semi-pro newszines (eg Locus, SF Chronicle) so the Asimov Award was news to me - thanks. Reminds me I need to track down an issue of Analog so I can mimic the text style for an APA contribution.

I've never seen Eidolon so I can't comment on its quality. I dislike the "Vote for me for the \_\_\_\_ Award" approach (the Fan Funds don't count, but if you look most of those are merely recounting a nominee's pluses). But it is a type of politics and thus there's no "law" against it. What about professional awards where a publisher can send out a bunch of copies of a novel to potential nominating voters to make the ballot and then, perhaps, to win ?

Brian Earl Brown  
11675 Beaconsfield  
Detroit MI 48224 USA

I've not seen many issues of Thyme so it's hard for me to compare your editions to previous editor's efforts. But you're certainly more frequent than, say, File 770, which is something to your credit. (Though admittedly Mike Glyer does File 770 all on his

lonesome and in addition to time-consuming duties with LASFS and his real-time job). It looks like you're covering all the solid news, about awards and such with both regularity and clarity of presentation. Thyme certainly looks like everything a newszine should be.

Ian Gunn's cover on issue #90 is a beaut. I hadn't really noticed Ian's art until this past year. It's wonderful stuff, intensely detailed while retaining a light, off-hand feel due to the mostly free hand rendering. The idea of using that gigantic framinjamitis to cook an egg is delightfully silly. Ian's *Space Time Buccaneers* is a lot of fun too, nice writing and the art, while much simplified, really tells the story well. I'm an old-fashioned kind of guy, I like linear story-telling in comics. This contemporary craze for montage and big "zap" pages may look impressive but just try and follow the story. (On the other hand I hear [at twice removed] that these montage comic books are selling in the **millions** of copies and some of the creator-artists [at Image Comics] are pulling in a half million dollars per issue! Geez-Marie, that's like printing money! The bubble has to burst soon on this racket and between now and then some of these guys are going to clean up).

*Quantum Leap* has broadcast its final episode over here. Sam meets the entity controlling his leaping, which is either a barkeep in 1953 west Virginia or God, and in any case he claims that Sam alone controls his leaping. I never heard anything about an animated episode. I suspect it was an intriguing concept, like Sam leaping into a dog, but once they priced the necessary animation, shelved it. Personally I thought the series had gotten very weird this year - vampires, evil leapers, ....

*Journey to the Center of the Earth* appears to have been a movie-length pilot. If you can put aside little things like the impossibility of vast caverns existing miles under the surface (they'd be collapsed by the weight of the overburden), or that they exist undetected by man (when earthquake waves deflecting around them would be a dead give away), then it was a pretty nice, albeit silly, story about a lost tunnelling vehicle wandering through endless pocket universes surrounded by miles of solid rock. It falls somewhere between *Star Trek* and that movie *The Land That Time Forgot* in quality.

*Doorways* still hasn't appeared here. I missed *Babylon 5* but hear it has gone into series production. *Space Rangers* needed another round of tune-ups, but this time by some fans in upper production who've actually read some space opera. *Space Rangers* was terrible and I'm sorry that it was. Because when you think about it, *Star Trek* has been an extraordinarily successful SF franchise. But there has not been one other science fiction show in the 25 years since William Shatner was launched into the cosmos that has ever been successful. If *Star Trek* SF can be

successful surely other SF ought to be successful. I'm mystified by the lack.

*Highlander* and *Time Trax* have been successful syndicated series. They are nominally science fiction because of their premises, but the SF makes up such a little part of any episode that if you are not paying attention you might miss it entirely. Both are too mundane feeling to call SF. The *Batman* animated series has been phenomenally successful in the US and I'm sure it will show up in Australia anon.

I think it's neat that you're including Australian SF News as a portion of Thyme, it gives one way to credit Merv Binns. The reviews have been well done and I'm sure prove valuable to the fans over there. I also like the idea of a good lengthy interview, even if the authors in #90 and #91 do nothing for me personally.

Your report on the Isaac Asimov Award raises some questions. It has two sponsors - Asimov's SF and the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts and yet the best they can come up with is a \$500 cash prize for best unpublished story. What pikers! Asimov's spends that much to buy just one 10,000 word story. Stranger still is that the story isn't guaranteed publication. If Asimov's is putting up the money you'd think they'd want to get their money back by publishing the story. By not guaranteeing publication they seem to be implying that they'll give an award in Dr. Asimov's name to a story of less than professional standards. It just doesn't make sense.

Buck Coulson 2677W-500N  
Hartford City IN 47348 USA

First time I ever got a fanzine with two return addresses on the envelope. I assume the Loneys do your forwarding for States issues. *[I send copies and stamped envelopes in bulk to Mark Loney cheaply. Mark then envelope stuffs and mails them on. He also accepts subscription payments in \$US for the time being. AS]* I disagree with the final Nebula ballot, but then I always did even when I was a member. There are enough stories that I like in science fiction to keep me reading it but they are seldom award winners. (One reason I never liked popularity contests is that I almost never agreed with their results).

Ian Gunn had a more balanced report on a Trek con than I usually see. He's right, too; there are people who join Trek fandom because it's the only facet of science fiction they've heard about, and who will become science fiction fans quite eagerly if given a chance. (Some of Juanita's and my best friends came in to fandom that way). Of course, most Trek fans have only a minimal interest in the rest of the field, and why not? They're still closer to science fiction than the majority of the population is.

Terry Frost has never been informed that humans are political animals? The winning strategy is to outmanoeuvre your opponent; complaints are the mark of a loser. Harry Warner Jr didn't mention that an entire US and British genre of 'thriller' fiction grew up around the idea of Soviet spies trying to acquire a new US or British invention. Some of it slopped over into actual science fiction. I remember reading one thriller that was mostly an account of WWII. I'd enjoy seeing some of the Russian brand in translation.

There's always some regret when an author dies, especially if said author produced stories one liked, as Keith Laumer did. But for Laumer, death may have been a relief. On the few occasions I saw him - I never actually met him - he seemed bitter and unapproachable. (One reason I never met him). He was estranged (to put it mildly) from his brother, March Laumer. It was March, I believe, who mentioned that Keith had been a star athlete in his youth, and was bitter because of injuries that kept him from continuing to be one. Of course it was Kelly Freas who related that at one convention Keith shoved Mohammed Ali out of the way with his cane in order to get onto the elevator first. Kelly said that Ali was furious, but obviously wouldn't get any good publicity by beating up a crippled old honky, so he let it pass, and Kelly managed to restrain his urge to laugh for fear of what might happen to him if he did. (This was at a Rivercon in Louisville, Kentucky, and Ali was at the same hotel as us because he'd come for some friend's marriage.) I would expect that Laumer's gradual loss of popularity in his later years didn't help his bitterness, but his writing did go down hill.

Lucy Sussex miscounts when she says there are only two SF authors named Alice. A third is Alice Mary Norton, who uses the pseudonym Andre Norton.

jan howard finder "The Place"  
522 Weldon Drive, D-2  
Watertown NY 13601 USA

Thank you for the unexpected present in my mailbox of Thyme. I have a vague idea of what is happening in Australian fandom, but a very complete update is nice to have. I noticed that you included Canadian awards in your news. Living most of the time very close to the Canadian border I get a chance to get "North of the Border" for a few cons. Ad Astra in Toronto is a very nice regional con. Toronto also puts on one of the best Star Trek cons, so I'm told. I had a good time at the two I've been at, Toronto Trek. There is a very nice local con in Montreal, Con\*Cept.

I didn't personally know Roger Weddall very well. I knew of him and had the pleasure of meeting him for a brief time at Magicon. My impression of him was that of a warm, friendly, slightly off-centre chap. I would have liked to have known him better. My loss.

The article on Ukrainian SF was interesting. I was recently at the British Eastercon/Eurocon on the Isle of Jersey. There were a large number of fans from Central and Eastern Europe. Not only can they party with the best of them (and appreciate a good back rub), but have great Capitalistic instincts as shown in the Hucksters room. The con itself was one of the best I've been at. I had a great time.

Terry Frost's column should provoke some interesting responses. Yes, it does look like as if the 1999 bid is Australia's to lose. However Eric's comments later in the issue also hit the nail on the head. It takes a whole lot of money to bid and win the bid. Eric's estimate of the cost might be a little bit high, but not by much.

I would like to contribute to the "Wombat Fund" for obvious reasons. I currently send my annual donation to the Taronga zoo in support of their wombats.

Good to see Merv having an outlet for his news. This has been a very interesting issue as it gives a picture of what is going on in Oz. It compliments the few other zines I get from Oz. I applaud the idea behind Artychoke. Ms. Valkova does a quite fine job.

What can one say about Ansible except that Dave Langford is behind it. You ought to publish some of Dave's after dinner speeches. Most, ah, interesting. Yes, do read Zombies of the Gene Pool. It's the sequel to Bimbo's of the Death Sun. Fandom and cons as they might really be!

Narrelle Harris C/- I.L.I. Mahomed Bayoumi St  
off Merghani St, Heliopolis  
Cairo, Egypt

Thanks for sending Thyme to us, it helps keep us in touch with fandom. The Ditmars are, I see, continuing to amuse the fannish population in one form or another. Get Stuffed once got in trouble for issuing 'How to vote' cards and not taking it seriously enough. Now Eidolon does the same and is in trouble for taking it **too** seriously. Isn't fandom wonderful!

Julia Bateman recently visited us here in the currently hot and dusty north...the dear lady also brought a stack of SF books with her which we read as though starved of literature - which, in some ways, we are. So I've had the pleasure of reading Brainchild (an excellent book and I hope George Turner is recovering from his stroke), Red Mars (where's the next chapter?) [Green Mars will be out in hc in August in the UK. AS] and Sarah Canary which didn't thrill me overmuch in that absolutely nothing is resolved. Or should I have been reading it as allegory rather than narrative?

The Jordan interview was interesting - he sounds so much more intelligent than the opinions of him from

Swancon 18 attendees seem to indicate. What on earth did he **say** to you people?

Ah, Michelle, thanks for your sympathy. Any zines sent to Tim and me would be hugely appreciated.

Thanks for the Artychokes too. It's a pleasure to be keeping up with Space Time Buccaneers. Hey, Feedback McBaird wears frilly knockers! See people, you **can** be tough and feminine at the same time. Tim and I **are** becoming involved in mail Art, Ian, there was in fact a Mail Art exhibition here in Cairo a few months ago. The Network infiltrates where even fandom has yet to murmur.

Craig Macbride PO Box 274, World Trade Centre  
Melbourne, Victoria 3005  
s900387@minyos.xx.rmit.OZ.AU

The first thing which strikes me about Thyme #91 is the section carefully liquid papered out between "Aussie" and "Bid" on page 3. Did you really go through every copy and do that?! What a fun idea.

I notice that FFANZ is sending Ian & Karen to New Zealand. Is this what we do to pay NZ back for all the unemployed it sends us?

Regarding awards, of course all Ditmar nominees should make "how to vote" forms. That way, in future, we can have a "Best How to Vote Form Ditmar" as well, then maybe "Best Long How to Vote Form", "Best Short How to Vote Form", "Best Artwork on a How to Vote Form", "Best How to Vote Form published in a Periodical", "Best Dramatic Presentation of a How to Vote Form" and so on.

Well, it's short, but it's LoC within a week of my receiving my copy. Don't bet on that happening too often.

Lloyd Penney 412-4 Lisa St., Brampton  
ON Canada L6T 4B6

Don't tell me you're getting the giant pro Star Trek cons ... these things are terrible. In North America, and in Britain, I believe, these cons are staged by Creation Entertainment, and have been a pox upon fandom for nearly ten years. The main aim of these cons is to sell crummy merchandise to a weak-minded public, and fandom is rapidly getting wise. Over time, even the most rabid Trek clubs and fans are boycotting them. Unfortunately, the casual viewers will still attend these gross tributes to commercialism. The usual Creation Con will still attract 3 000 - 5 000 people in the Toronto area (you can imagine how many in some large American cities), even though promotion is spotty, relations with fandom are hostile at best, public ripoffs are regular procedure (extra cost for special perks, which are almost never provided), and PR is terrible.

I can understand that Sheryl Birkhead hadn't heard of many of the fanzines nominated for an Aurora Award ... for starters two of the nominees were not fanzines but newsletters for two pro writers groups in Canada, SFFWA's Canadian division, and SF Canada. I don't agree with this, but many of the pros here are spoiled. One was a clubzine, another was a zine that lists Canadian cons, and the other was a french-language fiction zine.

I certainly agree with Harry Warner's and your observation that many young adult SF series are banished to ridiculous hours. The youth cable service here, YTV, broadcasts shows like *Thunderbirds*, *Stingray*, *Doctor Who* and *Red Dwarf* at times like Sunday at 2am (early Monday morning, actually), when they're in bed, ready for school Monday. I guess there's VCRs, but still ....

I've not been able to figure out why titles of books must be changed depending on which country is producing that book at the time. The title of the book as given by the author is the title of the book, and in the case given, British publishers be damned. I've heard that the works of J F Rivkin are hard to define because the quality changes so much ... that's because J F Rivkin is really two different female writers. I don't recall the real names, but one's on the east coast of the US, and the other's on the West.

I think I've seen Steve Scholz's skiffy figures on page 2 before. They're great little illos, especially Kryten and the Alien. *Space Time Buccaneers* .. hey, Ian, the shapeshifter bit's been done. Would the cat be an agent of the Timekeepers ?

Gerald Smith

GPO Box 429  
Sydney NSW 2001

I had been meaning to write to Thyme in relation to this year's Ditmars but did not get around to it. I don't believe the Ditmar sub-committee did institute the Best Periodical category in order to ensure that Eidolon won. Rather I think that it is an attempt to formally acknowledge the growth in pro and semi-pro zines in the past few years and extinguish any controversy over their eligibility. Unfortunately it has generated its own controversy. Perhaps the better description for this award category would have been Best Science Fiction or Fantasy Related Magazine - except that would be too wordy and might, in some cases, exclude fanzines. Maybe just Best Magazine would do, given that the awards are for achievement in science fiction.

Either way, of course, the problem remains that professional and semi-professional publications are competing with amateur publications - with the consequent imbalance in reader base and production resources. So, perhaps it could be split into two categories, amateur and professional. Unfortunately,

that way lies the road to the Ditmars having a category for everything. Personally, I believe that the problem is one that has been manufactured from nothing. The Ditmar Sub-Committee announces the categories and it is then, in large part, up to Australian fandom at large to decide what they believe to be eligible. Unless the nomination is clearly ineligible (such as a nomination for best Novel for a work published years before) then it should be accepted. If the category is Best fanzine, and sufficient people consider something like Eidolon or Science Fiction to be a fanzine that it gets on the ballot then it is a fanzine. The Sub-Committee should not be called on to make such line ball judgements of opinion.

On the matter of the Best Artwork category I feel it was unfortunate that the Ditmar Sub-Committee did not abide by the spirit of the resolution passed at Syncon '92. If they do not abide by past resolutions, however, they must be prepared for criticism. I have to say that I thought changing the category from artist to artwork was a good move. In the past there have been mumblings that artists were nominated and voted for on past achievements rather than the past year's body of work. Maybe the same change could be implemented for Best Fanwriter, that is make it Best Fan Writing. It may help to increase fans' awareness of the fannish works produced.

With this category you again have the problem of professional versus amateur artwork. If the spirit of the Syncon resolution was adhered to this problem would disappear, or you could adopt the same laissez faire attitude I mentioned in relation to Best Fanzine. All this business of professional versus amateur does raise the question of the whole philosophy of the Ditmars. Should they, as some have suggested, become entirely fannish awards for fannish endeavors (in which case the fiction awards disappear) or should they remain awards for both professional and fannish achievements ? My personal view is the latter for two reasons. First, the awards were instituted as a combination and have always been so. Second, I believe that, if the awards were restricted to fannish achievement, the interest in participating would diminish to a level far below what it is at now - which is itself very low. They could then vanish completely.

There are a few other points I wanted to make about the running of this year's Ditmar awards. It was a good thing that Quarantine won for Best Long Fiction. For one thing it deserved to win. For another, it overcame any problem had Brainchild won. Brainchild was first published in 1991, so was ineligible for the Ditmar this year. If you remember, it was on the ballot at Syncon '92. Some have disputed that it was first published in 1991. Well, I can tell you that it first appeared on the shelves of Galaxy Bookshops for sale in late 1991. As far as I am aware that was the first time it appeared for sale in Australia and is therefore the first year it was published. Since we



Many years ago there was a big drive to get science fiction included as a category on the most famous United States television contest show, *The \$64,000 Question*. Fortunately, it failed, because not long after this drive fizzled the big quiz show scandal broke, revealing that many of the contestants had been given advance knowledge of the questions that would be put to them, and one or more fans or pros might have been caught in the scandal if they'd participated.

To the best of my knowledge Hagerstown and vicinity share with Australia the situation of never having been privileged to see two of the television series you mention in the deprivation category, *Journey to the Center of the Earth* and *Doorways*. They apparently are syndicated series, which are sold to this and that station without running on any of the networks or cable channels, and weren't purchased by any of the Washington and Baltimore area stations that are visible in this city.

Earlier this month I stayed away from a con at the edge of Hagerstown that must have been a smaller cousin of your Starfest. Advance publicity in the local newspaper described it as multi-media, I didn't recognise the names of any of the pro guests of honour so they apparently all belonged to the television and movie versions of science fiction, and the name given the local event was the same as that held by a midwestern con which has been in existence for a quarter-century, indicating the sponsors knew little of con lore.

Mark Lawson's article is on the verge of the real truth about the way computers function in 'high tech' science fiction. They are cleverly disguised wands. In the old children's stories, the fairy queen had this wand she would swing at intervals and the wand always caused this or that miracle to occur. Today, science fiction writers utilise computers in exactly the same manner. The wand also shows up in *Star Trek* where it takes the form of the transporter which must be a magic wand because it is impossible to imagine that it could be explained scientifically.

Apparently the Koran has a lot of followers in the Hagerstown area. I've noticed recently an alarming tendency for local people to refuse to guess at the immediate future, the kind that is only a few seconds away. They step off sidewalks into the street without looking to see if any traffic such as my automobile is about to occupy the same space that they've just entered, so I assume they think it would offend Allah to imitate his knowledge of what is to come. Last week, a lightning bolt during a big thunderstorm set fire to the roof of a large apartment building in Hagerstown. A couple of passing motorists saw the flames, rushed into the building, and began pounding on doors to alert the residents that they were about to be burned to a crisp. In one apartment the occupants said they couldn't come out until they'd finished their

meal because it was almost time to go to work. Another occupant didn't answer the door but his voice was audible so the rescuer went in and found him talking on the telephone, continuing the conversation even after the warning about the conflagration. The last people who were finally persuaded to step outdoors did so just seconds before the roof collapsed into the top storey.

A curious coda about my remarks on the problems inherent in the approach of the year 2000: I read just the other day that the computer industry is having great difficulty figuring out how to cope with the coming of this year because most computers register only the last two digits of the year and all records will be messed up when the computers confuse the year 2000 with 1900, 1901 with 2001, and so on.

I also enjoyed reading *ASFN* even though it's doubtful I'll ever read many of the books reviewed. There is one disturbing thing that struck me when I read several reviews of books that contain modern fairy stories. When we were kids the fairy tales we loved were complete in eight or ten pages at the most. Why does it require 300 or 400 pages to tell a fairy story today?

#### Postcards to Artychoke

Patricia McKinley

15 Barker Street  
Ipswich QLD 4305

Rereading my old *Grassroots* last week I came upon a familiar looking cartoon strip. "That looks like Ian Gunn" I thought, and it was. There was also a fairly entertaining article on tip rapping. I'm curious as to whether this was a passing phase or if you are still interested in such stuff? (I'm fairly into permaculture myself, that covers just about everything.) Personally I particularly appreciate the *Fanimals* in #91. I'm all for lots of review type articles and 'personal favorites' lists, you can get into just as many arguments about why you like "X", what's wrong with "Y", and where do I find "Z", I want to read it. Surely that is the point of all the hooah, or maybe it ought to be. I'm also enjoying *Space Time Buccaneers*, but not quite as much as *Fanimals*. Looking forward to the next.

[No, since I sold my country estate and bought a house in the suburbs, I've given up scavenging for fencing material on rubbish dumps. Besides, I'm really a lousy gardener. Thanks for your comments on *Fanimals*. IG]

WAHF Damien Broderick, Ron Clarke, Harry J Cording, J Deane, Matthias Hofmann, Linnette Horne, Ben and Lesley James, Known Space Books, Dave Langford, Race Mathews, Elizabeth McCrone, Patricia McKinley, Roman Orszanski, Bruce Pelz, David L Russell, Ron Serdiuk, Peter Simpson, Rex Thompson, Jim Whitford and Art Widner.

## Trading Thyme

Magazines that have arrived in the Thyme PO Box since the last issue. Full address and ordering information will only be given if it's a new zine since the last semiannual full listing was done (#89 January 1993). Thanks to all who sent them and if I've cribbed some news without supplying due credit I apologise. Thyme is available for 'The Usual' which includes air mail trade, contribution (letter, article, artwork) and editorial whim.

**A Very Occasional Paper #4** (May 93)

**Blacklight #4** (June 93)

**Busswarble #5-6** (April-May 93)

**The Captain's Log #191** (June 93)

**Critical Wave #31** (June 93)

**Cry Havoc** May/June 93

**Czerwony #4**

**Data Extract #100-101** (May-July 93)

**Empties #11** (March 93)

Perzine - Edited by Martin Tudor.  
845 Alum Rock Road, Ward End, Birmingham,  
B8 2AG, UK. Available for 'The Usual', editorial whim  
or £5.

**Eyeballs in the Sky #7** (March 93)

**File 770 #95** (November 92), #97

**Fosfax #164** (April 93)

**Merv Binns Books SF Trading Post #49** (June 93)  
Advance Order List (June 93)

**The Mentor #79** (July 93)

**Mumblings from Munchkinland #9** (May 93)

Perzine - edited by Chris Nelson  
10/82 Patterson Street, Middle Park, Vic, 3206.  
Definitely available for LoCs, and probably 'The  
Usual'.

**Opuntia #12.1** (April 93), #13 (May 93)

**Phoenixzine #46** (May 93)

**Robots & Roadrunners** Vol. 8 No. 1 (March 93)

**Science Fiction Chronicle** May-June 93

**Space-Time Continuum** vol. 2 #2-3 (March-June 93)  
Newszine - Edited by Bjo Trimble, bimonthly.  
2059 Fir Springs Drive, Kingwood, TX, 77339-1701,  
USA. Subscriptions: \$US 8/6 issues USA Bulk Rate,  
\$US 10/6 issues USA First Class, \$US 12.50/6 issues  
Canada Air Printed matter, \$US 18/6 issues  
UK/Europe Air Printed Matter, \$US20/6 issues Pacific  
rim (NZ, Australia, Japan, Orient).

**Sticky Quarters #21** (December 92)

Perzine - Edited by Brian Earl Brown  
11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit MI 48224 USA.  
Available for \$US 1 or editorial whim.

**Threads Newsletter #24** (May 93)

**Trapdoor #12** (March 93)

Genzine - edited by Robert Lichtman  
PO Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442 USA. Available for  
'The Usual', editorial whim or \$US 4 per issue.

**Vapourware #1** (June 93)

Perzine - Edited by Greg Hills, irregular.  
PO Box 428, Richmond, Victoria, 3121.  
Write and ask for availability.

**Weber Woman's Wrevenge #44** (May 93)

Perzine - Edited by Jean Weber  
7 Nicoll Avenue, Ryde, NSW, 2112  
Available for LoCs, contributions, arranged trades,  
interesting clippings. Personal response preferred.

**The Whole Fanzine Catalog #30** (January 93)

Reviewzine - Edited by Brian Earl Brown  
11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, MI 48224 USA.  
Available for \$US 1 or trade.

**Zugzwang #1** (June 93)

Perzine - Edited by Kim Huett, PO Box 679.  
Woden, ACT, 2606. Available through SAPS, editorial  
whim or for 'The Usual'

Also received: **Defcon '93 PR #5** (May 93)  
**Hongcon '92 Post-Con Report**  
**Constantinople '94 PR** (June 93)  
**Moggycon PR** (June 93)

# M O G G Y C O N      J U L Y 3 1 / A U G U S T 1



YES, WE'RE DOING IT AGAIN! *CONSTANTINOPE* IS RUNNING ANOTHER MINICON, IN THE SAME PLACE AS LAST YEAR'S SUCCESSFUL *KITTYCON* (THE 4TH OAKLEIGH SCOUT GROUP HALL, ATKINSON STREET, OAKLEIGH).

THERE WILL BE PLENTY OF FUN ACTIVITIES, VIDEOS AND (SOME) SERIOUS PANELS TO KEEP YOU ENTERTAINED. FOOD WILL AGAIN BE PROVIDED. ALL OF THIS FOR THE LOW PRICE OF **\$30.00** FOR THE WEEKEND (\$35.00 AT THE DOOR, \$18.00 PER DAY).



## Social Calendar

2 July	MSFC	Favorite Coffee Night, 7.30 pm, St David's Hall, 74 Melville Rd, West Brunswick.
9 July	MSFC	Setting up for Winter Fete.
10 July	MSFC	Winter Fete, 9 am to 4 pm, St David's Hall.
11 July	Museum	2 pm, Swanston St, Melbourne, Films <i>Self Service</i> , <i>The Swarming Hordes</i> .
16 July	MSFC	Video night.
18 July	Threads	Bowling in garb, noon, Southern Cross Bowl.
18 July	Museum	2 pm, Film <i>The Birds</i> (Hitchcock thriller).
23 July	MSFC	Sausage Sizzle.
25 July	Austrek	Scienceworks, 11 am, 2 Booker St, Spotswood. \$7 adult, \$3.50 child, family package.
30 July	MSFC	Round robin story telling.
1 August	Threads	Medieval Garb Demonstration, 1 pm, 47 Reynolds Street, East Brunswick.
6 August	MSFC	Design and alien.
7 August	Austrek	'Not the Herald-Sun Artshow', 2-5 pm, St Luke's Hall, Dorcas St, Sth Melbourne.
13 August	MSFC	Favorite chocolate night.
20 August	MSFC	Cardboard horse races.
27 August	MSFC	Animal Quiz night.
28 August		Fourth Annual SF Ball: 'Cat's Night Out', Southern Cross Hotel, \$40 (meal), cash bar.
10 September	MSFC	Stone soup: bring a vegetable.
17 September	MSFC	Film night.
24 September	MSFC	Baby photo night.
24 October	Austrek	Car Rally

The **Nova Mob** meets the first Wednesday of each month at 6 pm for a meal at Erawan Restaurant, 205 Swan Street, Richmond (Victoria) and further discussion later. So far proposed meetings for 1993 are:

7 July	Julian Warner	Great SF Songs
4 August	Marc Ortlieb	
1 September		
6 October	Bruce Gillespie	Recent Kate Wilhelm
3 November	Lucy Sussex	Making Things Difficult for Yourself
1 December	Saturday 1pm	End of year break-up. Smorgasbord yum-cha. Lotus Inn, 26 Market Lane, BYO phone (03) 662 3059

**Critical Mass** usually meet to discuss SF and debate first Wednesday of each month, from 8 pm at SA Writers' Centre, 242 Pirie Street, Adelaide, with dinner beforehand at East End Coffee House.

7 July Roman Orszanski Some Post-Modernist Writings

The **Melbourne Horror Society** now meets monthly at 7.30 pm on the first Friday of every month at the Pancake parlour, market lane, Melbourne. For more information contact Chris Masters (03) 509 5366.

The **Phoenix SF Society** meets in Wellington, New Zealand, at 7.30 pm on the second wednesday of every month in the Hotel St George, cnr Willis and Boulcott Street. Their current program for 1993 is:

14 July	Phillip Mann Speaks	13 October	Tag Wrestling
11 August	SFX	10 November	Literary Panel
8 September	Board games	8 December	Quiz / Christmas party

The **SF Modellers Club** meets in Auckland at 869 New North Road, Mt Albert.

Enquiries to Felicity Scoones (President) Ph: 630 4757. Meetings at 7.30 pm, usually on a Wednesday.

14 July	<i>Tommyknockers</i> , watch the mini-series, learn about the experiences of two of its model makers	25 September	Paintball
21 July	Laser strike	13 October	Panel on literary SF
11 August	Presentation on outer space	23-25 October	RPG on the bridge set
21 August	Role playing day	6 November	Guy Fawkes party
8 September	Comics	10 November	Animation and computers
		8 December	AGM
		11-12 December	Christmas party and camp

## 1993 CONVENTIONS

**NONCON 93** 2-4 July

Gaming con. Griffith University, Brisbane. Roleplaying modules for AD&D, Call of Cthulhu, Cyberpunk, GURPS and Paranoia. Miniatures Battletech and Warhammer 40k. **Mail** PO Box 328, Carina, QLD, 4152

**ARCANA CON XI** 8-11 July

Gaming con. Collingwood College. Features AD&D, Call of Cthulhu, Cyberpunk, Elric, Freeforms, Pendragon, Rolemaster, Runequest, Shadowrun, Stormbringer, Systemless, Trauma, Vampires and Videos. Sausage Sizzle. **Mail** PO Box 125, Parkville, Victoria, 3052

**WHOVENTION II: CONTROL (1993 Australian Dr Who Convention)** 9-11 July

The Waratah Inn, 22-28 Great Western Highway, Parramatta **GoHs** Mary Tamm **Membership** \$A 60 to 8-7-93, \$A 65 at door, \$A 35 day **Dinners** Friday barbecue \$A 18, Saturday banquet \$A 40 **Room Rates** (per night) Single \$A 85, Twin \$A 45 per person, triple \$A 35 per person **Charity** Save the children fund **Mail** PO Box 223, Wentworth Building, Sydney University, NSW, 2006

**MOGGYCON** 31 July - 1 August

Relaxacon. 4th Oakleigh Scout Hall, Atkinson St, Oakleigh. Toast panel, treasure hunt, videos, 'Fit for fandom', celebrity heads, Special Guest, quiz, cute cat competition, camp fire stories and more. **Rates** \$30, \$18 1 day. \$35 at door. Meals included. **Rooms** BYO bedding. **Mail** PO Box 212, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria, 3005.

**CONFRANCISCO (1993 WorldCon)** 2-6 September

Moscone Convention Centre **GoHs** Larry Niven, Tom Digby, Alicia Austin, Wombat (jan howard finder) **Toastmaster** Guy Gavriel Kay **Dead GoH** Mark Twain **Rates** \$US 125. \$US 25 Sup. Age 0-8 free with guardian, Unattended Child 7-12 at 1-9-93 \$US 30. At the door: \$US 145 **Mail** 712 Bancroft Rd, Suite 1993, Walnut Creek, CA 94598, USA. Internet: confrancisco@tgv.com. Australian agent: Stephen Boucher, GPO Box 580D, Melbourne, Victoria, 3001. Phone (03) 280 0111

**SYNCON 93** 17-19 September

Relaxacon, minimal programming. Ivy Tudor Motor Inn, Bowral, NSW. **Rates** Adult - \$20, Children 4-12 accompanied by adult - \$5, Children under 4 - free. **Room rates** Older rooms \$70 Friday, \$75 Saturday. Newer rooms \$85/night. Twin share only. Extra person \$10. Buffet breakfast \$12/person. **Mail** GPO Box 429, Sydney, NSW, 2001 Phone (02) 798 8001

**ANZAPACON II** 2-3 October

Relaxacon, Melbourne. Celebration and collation of ANZAPA's 25th Anniversary Mailing. Open to present and past members of ANZAPA only. **Mail** GPO Box 2708X, Melbourne, 3001

**CUPCON** 29-31 October

Elizabethan Lodge Motor Inn, Blackburn North, Melbourne **GoH** David Gerrold **Features** Costume Parade, Auction, Pool Party **Charities** Wildlife Care Network, EPIC Association **Rates** until 31/5/93: Attending adult \$A 70, Student \$A 55, Unemployed \$A 55, 5yr-15yr (Aug 93) \$A 35, pre-school child free. Rates increase in June, then again in September, and at the door: Adult \$A 120, Student \$A 90, Unemployed \$A 90. 5-15yr \$A 60, pre-school child free **Room rates** 1,2 or 3 people: \$125 per night. 4 people: \$150 per night. Limited room numbers **Hucksters** Per day: fan \$A 25, pro \$A 35; For Sat/Sun: fan \$A 40, pro \$A 55; Sat/Sun plus membership: fan \$A 100, pro \$A 115 **Mail** GPO Box 476D, Melbourne, Victoria, 3001

**CIRCULATION 6** December. Canberra SF Society relaxacon.

## 1994 CONVENTIONS

**CONSTANTINOPLE (1994 Australian Natcon/Australasian Media Natcon)** 1-4 April

Southern Cross Hotel, Melbourne **GoHs** William Gibson, Colin Baker (to be confirmed), Bruce Gillespie, Narrelle Harris **Membership** \$A 90, sup. \$A 20, voting \$A 5. At 1-4-94 Child aged 5-12 \$A 40, under 5 free **Charities** Cat Protection Society of Victoria, Royal Melbourne Zoo **Mail** PO Box 212, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria, 3005

**INTERACT (SF Media Convention)** 23-25 April

National Convention Centre. Contact: GPO Box 2080, Canberra, ACT, 2601

**SILICON (1994 New Zealand National)** 3-6 June

Bentley's Hotel (ex Alglan), Dunedin. **GoHs** Barbara Hamby, Tom Cardy **Membership** \$NZ 40, \$NZ 10 sup. **T-Shirt** \$NZ 30 **Mail** PO Box 333, Dunedin, New Zealand

**CONFUSION** 1994

Perth Media Con. **Mail** PO Box 532, Bentley, WA, 6102

**CONADIAN (1994 Worldcon)** 1-5 September 1994

Winnipeg Convention Centre **GoHs** Anne McCaffrey, George Barr, Barry B Longyear, Robert Runte **Mail** PO Box 2430, Winnipeg, MB, Canada R3C 4A7 **Fax** 204-942-3427

For those interested, Thyme #91 had the following distribution: 125 distributed by Merv Binns

Australia	140	Sweden	1	UK	4	New Zealand	7
Honk Kong	1	Netherlands	1	Canada	4	Czech	1
USA	34	Germany	1	Egypt	1	Ukraine	1 (321)

# AUSTRALIAN



# NEWS

Number 53

July 1993

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Edited by

Merv Binns  
PO Box 491, Elsternwick,  
Victoria 3185

Alan Stewart  
PO Box 222, World Trade Centre  
Melbourne, Victoria 3005

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It often occurs to me that science fiction readers and fans are very fortunate in being able to meet their idols, the writers. No other field of popular literature can claim the same close contact between the readers and the authors as SF&F. I myself feel very fortunate in the people I have met and discussed their writing and other things with and the many autographed books I have in my collection. Going way back to the early 1950s **Arthur C Clarke** was in Melbourne on his way to the Great Barrier Reef to research a book. Coast of Coral was published soon after and Deep Range also resulted from that trip. The Melbourne SF Club took Clarke to dinner at a crummy little Melbourne hotel. You have no idea how hard it was to find somewhere decent to eat in those days. It was a big thrill for us all meeting Clarke and contact was maintained for some years.

Around the same time **A Bertram Chandler** started calling in on his way from England to Australia by ship. He was usually making for Sydney, but occasionally stopped in at Melbourne and **Bob McCubbin**, who was the Club chairman and used to correspond with Bert as I called him, got some of the MSFC together and we had dinner with "Bert". I found out later that he preferred to be called Jack, which Bob always called him. The Jack I believe was also a nickname because he was a sailor. He finally settled in Australia, in Sydney, took a job with a local shipping line and every now and again popped in on his way from New South Wales to South Australia on ships carrying iron ore, by then being ship's captain. As readers and lovers of his SF books will know his life and experience on the sea was very evident in his books. In The Bitter Pill, published by Wren in Melbourne, he describes a tricky berthing of a ship in Tasmania. One evening **Paul Stevens** and I spent an hour or two talking with Bert on board a ship berthed in the Yarra. We had been consuming Tasmanian hard cyder and he sent us off with a drop of delicious port. Not much work was done at Space Age the next day. A Bertram Chandler became the patron of the Australian SF Foundation and in his honor, he died in 1984, they have named their award for outstanding contributions to Australian science fiction the A Bertram Chandler Memorial Award. I do not know if I

am an appropriate recipient but I was honored to be recently presented with the award and very pleased, considering my close association with Bert himself. Actually I can think of many more people who have done a lot to foster the writing and publishing of SF in Australia and I hope they are all honored in due course, but I certainly have done my bit to encourage the reading and writing of SF, and fandom in general, in Australia.

My greatest thrill as an SF reader and fan was attending World SF Conventions both in Australia and in Canada and England. I was introduced to **Robert Bloch** at Torcon in Toronto by the late **Susan Wood**, who with **Mike Glicksohn** was Fan GoH at Aussiecon I in 1975. Mike incidentally turned up at Torcon with his pet python, but the hotel got very upset and told him to take it away. A long way away! Bob Bloch was a very nice guy and along with Isaac Asimov, and many other big names attending Torcon who I saw and listened to with my tongue hanging out, impressed me greatly with his friendliness and humor. He was a natural for a Guest of Honor at the last and only SF convention I masterminded, Cinecon, because of his close association with the cinema. **Harry Harrison** made a very funny speech at Torcon also, while a little bit inebriated and while he was carrying on a feud with **Ted White** over non-payment of dues for stories, I think published in Amazing by White. We met Harry here in Melbourne and organised a one day affair for him to meet the local fans. Then we took Harry and his wife on a trip on Puffing Billy, to placate their passion for train rides. I could and will go on in future columns. The conventions and Space Age Bookshop gave me many opportunities to meet authors and people and I will try to recall a few more next time.

A brief update on recent publications of books by Australian SF&F authors must include one of the editors of Aurealis, **Dirk Strasser**, whose fantasy novel Zenith is out from Pan this month. A launching was to be held at Minotaur Books on Saturday 10 July. **Isobelle Carmody** has a new fantasy novel, The Gathering, out from Penguin. **Paul Voerman**'s second novel, The Weird Colonial Boy, was launched by **Ania**

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**Walwicz** for Gollancz agents Jacaranda Wiley at the Victorian Writers Centre on June 28. Paul's earlier book, And Disregards the Rest has just been released in paperback by Gollancz. **George Turner's** latest novel, The Destiny Makers, is also to hand in hard cover from Avonova/Morrow. It has a striking cover illustration featuring a character in the foreground who could be George himself. This novel has been selected by the US SF Bookclub, as has Rynosseros by **Terry Dowling**. **Paul Collins** has again entered the US market with five sales. "Straight-from-the-hip no-holds-barred" a fantasy horror article, "Collaborations" and "Rejection, rejection, rejection!" are three articles on writing he originally published in Scope and SF Writers' News. They will be appearing in issues of the US zine Just Write. Also appearing in Glimpses will be The Government in Exile which originally appeared in Urban Fantasies. An original story, For Hell the Bell Tolls, has been accepted by Eldritch Tales. He has also obtained a British agent, Dorothy Lumley, for his 'Best Australian SF Anthology' which contains stories by George Turner, Damien Broderick, Sean McMullen and others.

Twenty three years ago I cleverly managed to Open Space Age Books on my own birthday. Me ? I am 59 today, July 8. I am saving the big party until next year. Next year is looking like a big year, and I am looking forward to Constantinople, the convention at Easter, and the following year the first ever SF con in Tasmania. More on that later. Time does march on as

## Local Releases

hc = hard cover

tpb = trade paperback (C format)

pb = paperback (mass market, B format)

### May 1993

*Non-Stop*  
*Nomansland*

Brian Aldiss  
D G Compton

Roc pb \$12.95  
Gollancz hc \$36.95

### June 1993

*Dancing in the Volcano*  
*Starwolves: Dreadnought*  
*Ghost Beyond Earth*  
*Battletech: Mercenary's Star*  
*Personal Darkness*  
*Hearts, Hands and Voices*  
*6: A Nomad of the Time Streams*  
*Wheel of Stars*  
*Red Mars*  
*Heart Readers*  
*And Disregards the Rest*  
*The Weird Colonial Boy*  
*The Martian Inca*  
*Spider World: The Magician*

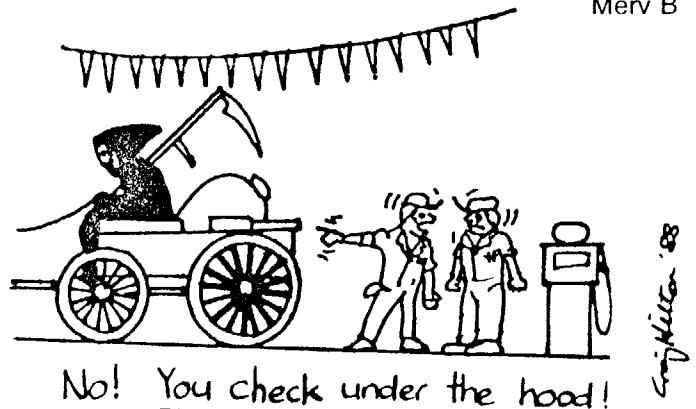
Anne Gay  
Thorarinn Gunnarsson  
G M Hague  
William H Keith, Jr  
Tanith Lee  
Ian McDonald  
Michael Moorcock  
Andre Norton  
Kim Stanley Robinson  
Kristine Kathryn Rusch  
Paul Voermans  
Paul Voermans  
Ian Watson  
Colin Wilson

Pavilion hc \$35.00  
Penguin pb \$10.95  
Pan pb \$11.95  
Penguin pb \$13.95  
Little Brown hc \$35.00  
Gollancz pb \$11.95  
Millenium hc (tpb) \$39.95 (\$24.95)  
Pan (Tor) pb \$9.95  
Grafton pb \$12.95  
Millenium tpb \$19.95  
Gollancz pb \$11.95  
Gollancz hc \$32.95  
Gollancz pb \$11.95  
Grafton pb \$11.95

I get older, all my icons get older and they are slowly leaving the scene. **Lester del Rey**, science fiction author and editor, died on May 10. He was 77, not only an influential force as an author but he introduced many other writers to the field and he will be long remembered for his contribution. The same can be said for **Avram Davidson** who died on May 8, aged 70. Other recent losses included famous mystery and sometime SF writer **Leslie Charteris** who was 85, and **Robert Westall**.

Some notable books due for publication soon include The Hammer of God by Arthur C Clarke (Bantam), Virtual Light by William Gibson (Bantam), The Hammer and the Cross by Harry Harrison (Tor), The Norton Book of Science Fiction edited by Ursula K LeGuin with Brian Atteby, and Pern: First Fall by Anne McCaffrey (Del Rey). More later, but if you want to keep up with all the new releases I suggest you subscribe to Locus or SF Chronicle.

Merv B



## July 1993

<i>The World of Charles Addams</i>	Charles Addams	Hamish Hamilton	hc	\$60.00
<i>The State of the Art</i>	Iain Banks	Orbit	pb	\$14.95
<i>Against A Dark Background</i>	Iain Banks	Orbit	hc	\$32.95
<i>The Gathering</i>	Isobelle Carmody	Puffin	tpb	\$11.95
<i>The Hammer of God</i>	Arthur C Clarke	Gollancz	hc	\$34.95
<i>Sign for the Sacred</i>	Storm Constantine	Headline	tpb	\$24.95
<i>Warpath</i>	Tony Daniel	Millenium	tpb	\$19.95
<i>Magician</i>	Raymond E Feist	Grafton	pb	\$14.95
<i>Shadowrun 9: Shadowplay</i>	Nigel Findlay	Penguin	pb	\$12.95
<i>Puffin Book of SF Stories</i>	Nicholas Fisk (ed)	Viking	hc	\$24.95
<i>The Sorcerer's Appendix</i>	Andrew Harman	Legend	pb	\$10.95
<i>A Green Journey</i>	Jon Hassler	Random House	pb	\$11.95
<i>Battletech: Ideal War</i>	Christopher Kubasik	Penguin	pb	\$12.95
<i>Evolution Annie &amp; Other Stories</i>	Rosaleen Love	Women's Press	pb	\$14.95
<i>Crystal Line</i>	Anne McCaffrey	Bantam Press	tpb	\$21.95
<i>Gloriana</i>	Michael Moorcock	Phoenix	pb	\$14.95
<i>7: The Dancers at the End of Time</i>	Michael Moorcock	Millenium	hc (tpb)	\$39.95 (\$24.95)
<i>Bloodlust: Real Vampires</i>	Carol Page	McPhee Gribble	pb	\$14.95
<i>The Carpet People</i>	Terry Pratchett	Corgi	pb	\$ 9.95
<i>The Tale of the Body Thief</i>	Anne Rice	Penguin	pb	\$12.95
<i>Zenith</i>	Dirk Strasser	Pan	pb	\$12.95
<i>Teklab</i>	William Shatner	Pan	pb	\$12.95
<i>Tek Vengeance</i>	William Shatner	Pan	tpb	\$19.95
<i>Sideshow</i>	Sheri S Tepper	Harper Collins	hc	\$35.00
<i>The Hand of Chaos</i>	Weis & Hickman	Bantam	hc	\$29.95

## August 1993

<i>The Thief of Always</i>	Clive Barker	Fontana	pb	\$ 9.95
<i>The Mists of Avalon</i>	Marion Zimmer Bradley	Penguin	pb	\$14.95
<i>8: Elric of Melniboné</i>	Michael Moorcock	Millenium	hc (tpb)	\$39.95 (\$24.95)
<i>Red Dwarf: Primordial Soup</i>	Grant Naylor	Penguin	pb	\$12.95
<i>The Vampire Diaries: 1 Awakening</i>	L J Smith	Bantam Young Adult	pb	\$6.95
<i>The Vampire Diaries: 2 Fury</i>	L J Smith	Bantam Young Adult	pb	\$6.95
<i>The Vampire Diaries: 3 Struggle</i>	L J Smith	Bantam Young Adult	pb	\$6.95
<i>Dark Fire</i>	Jonathan Wylie	Corgi	pb	\$11.95

## Reviews

Alan Stewart

### Battlestation 2: Vanguard

edited by David Drake and Bill Fawcett

Ace pb March 1993 264 pages \$US 4.99  
ISBN 0-441-86032-X

This latest volume in a shared world series, which carries on after the six-volume *The Fleet*, contains 11 stories (one collaboration), a poem and interludes which means 14 authors have contributed. Most concentrate on the battlestation *Stephen Hawking*, including enemy Ichtion hatchlings hidden aboard, but space battles and planets also play their part.

With human and Khalian allies, as well as a sizeable

contingent of traders, the battlestation offers plenty of scope for intrigue. In these short stories there's not room to develop characterisation depth, but some personnel carry over from volume one. It's mainly action and fighting, wanting to see what trap or difficulty has to be overcome next. Hard military type SF but with a twist as the writers include Mercedes Lackey and Katherine Kurtz. In fact half the authors in this volume are women.

The variety of approaches and events makes for entertaining reading and there's hints, like finding the location of an Ichtion home world, that a grand finale is not long coming. As this will probably be another six volume series (copyright Bill Fawcett and Associates), it will be interesting to see how the editors and interlude writers spin it out.

Richard Hryckiewicz

### Rediscovery: A Novel of Darkover

by Marion Zimmer Bradley & Mercedes Lackey

DAW hc April 1993 307 pages \$US 18.00  
ISBN 0-88677-561-2

I have been a long time fan of Darkover, ever since reading The Bloody Sun, more years ago than I care to remember. When this book came out, and Alan offered it for review, I jumped at the chance. If you have read any of the Darkover books, this one is a must. Even if you haven't read any of the others, it stands very well on its own. It fills in a lot of the background that is hinted at in the other books of the series.

Here that we learn more about Raymon Kadarin, a quick glimpse into his origins and how he was recruited by the Empire. We also find out why the Empire set up base at Caer Donn and started to deal with Aldaran rather than the Comyn Council in the lowlands. Leonie of Arilinn is introduced and we see how she developed into the person seen in the later books.

It starts with the approach of the Starship Minnesota to Cottman's Star, on a routine exploration mission. The crew know of Lost Colony ships, but do not expect to find one here. We are introduced to the main characters and the understanding that telepathy is not something that is either understood or believed in by most of the crew. Needless to say, some of the crew are telepathic to some extent, just not greatly so. This will change once they land on Darkover (aka Cottman IV).

On Darkover, we meet Lorill and Leonie Hastur on their way to Dalereuth Tower, where Leonie is about to start her training in the control of her laran. During the stopover the night before her arrival, Leonie has a premonition that something is coming from the moons surrounding Darkover. She is right, it is the coming of the Terrans and many changes for both Darkover and the crew of the Minnesota. To say much more would spoil the rest of the story.

The book is a quick read, especially if you have read any previous Darkover books. It keeps your interest right till the end, and I found that once I started, it was quite hard to put down. Some characters seem to not have as much effort put into them as I would expect from Ms Bradley, but the serious feminist overtones are also not as prevalent as in some of her previous works.

Most of the lead characters are women, with the males portrayed somewhere between ignorant

barbarians and semi-civilised people. This can get a bit wearing after a while, but is not as bad as some of her earlier works. She appears to have mellowed a bit, just a bit.

If you want to catch up on some of the early history of First Re-Contact with Darkover, this is definitely the way to do so. The book is a good read and is not likely to disappoint. In the space of about two months I have read it twice, and feel that a third reading would not go amiss.

Terry Frost

### The Sea's Farthest End by Damien Broderick

Aphelion tpb April 1993 192 pages \$12.95  
ISBN 1-875346-07-4

I've heard it said of this book that its title is where it belongs. Actually, that isn't what was said, but I thought I'd eschew scatology this time. My instinctive reaction was to agree. This book reads like a young adult's novel and runs the reader through the old twin plot-lines that tie up in the end gambit. The two-plot novel is great if done well. William Goldman did it in a book called Control and it worked a treat. Unfortunately the tag-team in this one reads like they're two pieces of two *different* works sewn together just to see if it could be done.

One stream of the plot is set in a galactic empire that resembles Indian mythology more than slightly and it is hinted that it is the source of that mythos. Chakravalin is the son of Jagannatha, a galactic emperor who is by Khan Noonian Singh out of Darth Vader with a dollop of Krafft-Ebbing chucked in. The boy falls in love with Adriel, a genetically engineered princess - the father takes her as his own concubine and it's on for young and old.

Plot two involves Dayton Ellis, a nerdy guy who gets aphasic around girls. He was raised in an isolated scientific community in the Outback and has been suddenly thrust into the RipCurl culture of Sydney's Northern Beaches. He too finds a squeeze and gets tied up with the Face on Mars and crystal skull which is a malevolent nth generation version of a Sega Megadrive with an operating system written by the Kleth, immortal aliens who are hiding inside the black hole at the centre of the galaxy.

The blending of the two plots doesn't work. There is some fine writing here. The duelling scene between Chakravalin and Jagannatha and some of the humorous scenes on the Dayton side of things show that Broderick hasn't lost his touch. Unfortunately, the whole construction just doesn't hold together.

Alan Stewart

**The Weird Colonial Boy** by Paul Voermans

Gollancz hc June 1993 302 pages \$32.95  
ISBN 0-575-05325-9

The Weird Colonial Boy starts out in Melbourne, 1978, with narrator Nigel Donahue. Soon he follows a swordtail fish into an alternative Australia. It's still 1978, but public floggings take place and all male prisoner gangs serve as cheap farm labor. Despite being as out of place as a chook in a flock of emus, Nigel manages to survive, albeit as an escapee and outlaw. In this guise he assumes the moniker "The Weird Colonial Boy" and directs the surreal exploits of his loyal band towards returning to his original world.

The opening chapters were enthralling for this reader. The descriptions of Melbourne localities, Nigel's discovery of the disappearing swordtail and his endeavors to exploit the interdimensional opening makes one keep reading. What, or more importantly who, Nigel finds on the other side keeps the plot moving, but it never regains that early fascination. The engineered feat of his return comes across as too far fetched or unreal compared to his pragmatic initial investigations.

Steve Read has done a good job on the cover illustration which actually reflects elements of the text. The name of Donahue echoes the Jack Doolan of the original 'Wild Colonial Boy' song, and other referents are Australian, apart from the alternative reality baggage from the US civil war, the usual fare in this subgenre. Recommended as an entertaining read and interesting extrapolation and development of a possible Australian society, given the 'what if' of the assumed different history.

LynC

**The Gate of Ivory** by Doris Egan

**Two-bit Heroes** by Doris Egan

Daw pb January 1992 319 pages \$US 4.99  
ISBN 0-88677-500-0

**Guilt-Edged Ivory** by Doris Egan

On the world of Ivory, humans are no longer what they seem. Outwardly they are perfectly normal, but technologically backward. Technology, you see, is a little irrelevant if you can make magic do the job just as effectively. Enter one "normal", rather short, red haired, scholar from another planet. Theodora from Athena, born on Pyrene, first introduced in The Gate of Ivory, has succumbed to Ran Cormallon's

sorcerous charms and returned with him to Ivory. At the start of Two-bit Heroes they are "one quarter married".

On what should have been a routine investigation up in the remote north-west sector, Theodora is mistaken for some other outworlder because of her red hair. You know the old joke, "All X look alike", where "X" stands for any race except your own. Unfortunately the person she is mistaken to be is the partner of a most infamous outlaw, and once more Ran and Theo find themselves in heaps of trouble. Trouble, which Theo makes worse with a few careless utterances about Robin Hood which gives the outlaw ideas. These ideas attract the attention of the planetary government. But this is Ivory where successful malcontents can be dealt with to the mutual satisfaction of all parties. Except perhaps a few hapless kidnapes who just happened to be in the wrong place.

In Guilt-Edged Ivory the two become involved in aristocratic in-fighting. Amongst the aristocracy murder is an art form, a game, where bunglers pay heavily for their lack of elegance. Ran is called in to investigate when one such bungler dies, and his family has reason to believe his death comes from those outside the game. Once again Theo's unorthodox behaviour, which drives the straight conservative Ran to distraction, reveals more than appears to be the case, and once again gets them into hot water.

There is, however, a more serious undercurrent in this tale. The murder mystery is merely the setting for the tale. Ran and Theo have now been married for about a year. Ran, as head of the extended Cormallon family, has to produce an heir. (Ivorans are backward in more than just technology). But Theo keeps having nightmarish premonitions about their potential offspring. Knowing how important an heir is to Ran, she dares not confide her fears to him. To make matters worse, it seems that his grandmother foresaw healthy descendants coming from their union. Which premonition is right? Can they both be correct? The full solution to this puzzle is only hinted at and is, I suspect, going to be the subject of the next book.

The Ivoran world is heavily based on the Arabia of the '1001 Nights', but where the first two novels are fairly light-hearted romps into culture clash, mystery and romance, this latest novel starts dealing with some of the problems inherent in interspecies relationships. I started reading the series because I wanted light-hearted fun reading, and I was rewarded with that. But I am glad to see that it is getting meatier. It is still possible, if you skim, to continue getting the original reward, but it does no justice to the turn the series is taking, and the rewards are greater if you don't.

Paul Ewins

**A Nomad of the Time Streams** by Michael Moorcock

Millenium (Allen & Unwin) tpb June 1993 457 pages  
\$24.95 ISBN 1-85798-034-4

An omnibus edition comprising: **The Warlord of the Air**, **The Land Leviathan** and **The Steel Tsar**.

**The Warlord of the Air** was the first Michael Moorcock book I ever read. I would have been about twelve I suppose and vaguely remember enjoying it but getting bogged down in **The Land Leviathan** and never finishing it. Not having re-read either book in the intervening fifteen years, my only memory of the contents was that airships were involved and an Imperial British setting was used. I was thus able to read both books, and the third in the series, **The Steel Tsar**, with a fresh perspective.

At their simplest, the three books concern the adventures of Oswald Bastable, a turn of the century English cavalry officer who is caught in an earthquake on the Indian frontier and is catapulted into a series of alternate time streams. The common thread, apart from Bastable, is the examination of various political systems in the form of a "what might have been" look at the twentieth century.

The books are written in the manner of the Edwardian novels that Moorcock champions in the introduction and it is a style that is easy to read and fits the subject matter well. All the book needed was a brown leather binding with plenty of gold leaf and a lithograph or two as illustrations and you would swear it really was an Edwardian adventure. Back in that time there were many more people who thought that anarchism and marxism/communism really did provide a serious alternative to the political systems that were in place. The message from the author is that perhaps they could have been viable if the trap of paternalism was avoided.

In **The Warlord of the Air**, Oswald Bastable finds himself in 1973, a 1973 where the major powers, Britain, France, Japan, Russia and the USA all have empires and have been at peace with each other since the turn of the century. The revolutions and nationalistic uprisings that reshaped our world have not occurred and most of Asia and Africa is still under colonial rule. After reestablishing his life he winds up on a tramp airship with passengers and crew who turn out to be notorious anarchists. From there he is caught up in events as the major powers fight the socialist/anarchist menace up to the climax over Hiroshima when he is once again catapulted back to his own time.

The second adventure, **The Land Leviathan**, takes place in 1904. Europe has been devastated by war and the major powers are America, a Japanese /Australasian federation and a dictatorship that rules almost all of Africa. The last free nation in Africa is Bantustan (formerly South Africa) which is run by an Indian pacifist called Ghandi, and it is here that Bastable ends up. As part of the delicate process of diplomacy Bastable is despatched to the New Ashanti Empire at the request of its ruler, known as the Black Attila. The Black Attila has a reputation for hatred towards all white people and the tales of his conquest of Europe are full of cruelty and bloodshed. As with the anarchists in **The Warlord of the Air**, Bastable's repugnance for the Black Attila is eventually tempered as he sees the excesses of the white Americans in their fight against the Black Attila's forces. Once again the message of the book is that right and wrong often depends entirely on your point of view.

The last book is set in 1941 and deals with a cossack uprising in a democratic socialist Russia. However **The Steel Tsar** has more of an emphasis on the mechanism of travel between the alternate timestreams and the responsibilities of those few who are able to make that journey. While there is a little group of characters, the chrononauts, who appear in each book, albeit in different forms, it is only in **The Steel Tsar** that their purpose is explained. In many ways they are superfluous to the first two books, although I suppose they do reinforce the parallel nature of the time streams. I suspect that the only reason for the existence of **The Steel Tsar** is to allow a satisfactory tie-in of these characters to the rest of Moorcock's works.

The verdict ? Well, the books are much more political than is normal for Moorcock, but this in no way detracts from the story nor does it make the books at all difficult to read. Even though they could easily be read by themselves they do work better if read as a single novel. **The Land Leviathan** provokes the strongest reactions, dealing as it does with racism, a subject that usually engenders much more passion than politics. **The War Lord of the Air** is the better story, with a lot of twists and turns and a much broader view of its alternate world than the other two. While I enjoyed **The Steel Tsar** it was a case of more of the same rather than building on a theme and even though there is nothing intrinsically wrong with it, it really only serves to fill in a few blanks and round out the series.

I wouldn't rate **The Nomad of the Time Streams** as the best series Moorcock has done, but even so it is still worth buying. It should also be noted that the books, particularly **The Steel Tsar**, have been rewritten so if your copies are a bit worn it may be worth updating them.



Richard Hryckiewicz

**The Summer Queen** by Joan D Vinge

Pan tpb April 1993 1091 pages \$22.95  
ISBN 0-330-32447-0

I guess that this book would have been easier to get into if I had read The Snow Queen first. However, it does manage to stand on its own. The way the characters refer to events in the previous book makes it easy to work what had happened before, even if only briefly. It is not a small book, at least the tpb wasn't, but once I managed to get into it, it moves along quickly. At one stage, I managed to finish the final third of the book in one sitting.

The story takes place on several planets within the Hegemony. Tiamat is a relatively primitive world, kept that way by the Hegemony for 150 years, with a break of around the same length because of the means of transport used. In this universe, the secret of FTL travel has been lost and wormholes are used to get from place to place. The only problem is that the wormholes only go to certain places. The one around Tiamat is unusable, due to the orbits of its suns, for about 150 years. The book opens just after the Hegemony has left, destroying all forms of advanced technology on the way out - can't let the primitives have it, they might get ideas above their station and want something real when the Hegemony returns. Unfortunately for the Hegemony, the "primitives" have their own ideas about what is best for themselves and are to developing their own technology.

Another major player in the story is the Old Empire, or more accurately, the relics it has left behind on many worlds. It is known that they had a practical FTL system, mainly because of the number of planets that have relics left on them. The palace of the Summer Queen is one such artefact. We also have the obligatory secret society that is attempting to control everything, along with the schisms that have occurred over time. One side of the society wants the best for everyone, as long as they decide what is best. The other part of the society is out to get whatever it can, and the rest of the people can go hang.

Life for our heroes would be simple if only two factions existed, however, there are wheels within wheels within wheels in both parties, depending on the level of knowledge to which you have access. Life gets confusing when you have no real idea who can be trusted and how far they can be trusted. Amid all this fun and games, we have an immortality drug, the recovery of the secret of the FTL drive, betrayal of just about everyone by everyone else and secret society against secret society. Some interpersonal clashes that could have been avoided by the simple expedient of people talking to each other and an amazing secret

that affects everything in the universe. Unfortunately, the secret becomes evident about halfway through the book and very few people seem to twig to what is causing a lot of their problems.

All in all, once I managed to get into it, the book was worth the effort of reading. Possibly, having read The Snow Queen, it would have been easier.

Merv Binns

**The Moat Around Murcheson's Eye**  
by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle

Harper Collins hc April 1993 402 pages \$39.95  
ISBN 0-00-224165-X

It has taken Niven and Pournelle around twenty years to write this sequel to The Mote In God's Eye and as with most sequels, I was a little disappointed. I guess a few loose ends from the first book were answered but the sequel was to me very shallow. Readers of both these authors stories will be familiar with their style, so it is obvious to me that the alien race they call the Moties is a Niven creation and the politics and military aspects are Pournelle. This second book is very much Pournelle and it seems less Niven.

The Moties are recognised as a threat to human domination, and perhaps even existence, in the galaxy so attempts were made to keep them confined to their own planetary system. The FTL jump off points, which are related to the positions of stars throughout the galaxy, have been continuously guarded by the human space navy to prevent the Moties from breaking out and using their, in some ways, superior science to "take over". However, a certain astronomical event is found to be imminent which will shift the position of the FTL jump off positions, referred to as I-points. So the Moties do steal a march on the humans and do break out of the human enclosure of their planetary system.

Numerous people who figure in the first book also appear in the sequel, including trader and magnate Horace Hussein Al-Shamlan Bury and Kevin Renner, both of whom, along with others, become involved in an attempt to restrict the Motie break-out. How this comes about and the new relationship with the Moties that results, along with scooting around space, numerous battles and clashes with the Moties, is the story. All this becomes a bit tedious and more attention could have been paid to the Moties themselves, their civilisation and way of life, instead of the few little snippets that we get. It would have made it more interesting to me at any rate.

Most readers enjoy reading more about characters and places they have liked, but do not expect too much from this one. It really does not have very much new and was therefore quite disappointing.

Beverley Hope

**Dragonmaster** by Gael BaudinoLynx pb 1988 452 pages \$US 4.50  
ISBN 1-55802-003-9**Duel of Dragons** by Gael BaudinoRoc pb August 1991 384 pages \$US 4.99  
ISBN 0-451-45097-3

Gael Baudino has created a tale about a twentieth century professor of medieval studies and his assistant, two physically unimpressive and ineffectual people, who are transformed into physically powerful individuals capable of great mastery of swordplay in the seemingly impossible medieval land of Gryllth. Professor Solomon Braithwaite becomes Dythragor Dragonmaster, his assistant Suzanne Helling becomes Alowzon Dragonmaster. Both are bearers of Dragonswords and can ride Silbakor the Dragon. Silbakor, who in the twentieth century resides in a paperweight, can summon the Dragonmasters to this other land when there is a need to defend it.

The first adventure sees the land attacked by the Dremords, hoards with medieval weaponry. In the second book Suzanne, as Alowzon, is forced to face another land across the sea from Gryllth. This land is inhabited by pacifists who are being attacked by a faceless enemy who wear a typical military outfit and have twentieth century weapons, such as from Suzanne's worst nightmares of Vietnam.

While initially these books seem like just another good versus evil fantasy story, with a bit of a twist given the twentieth century and pseudo-medieval settings, there is a deeper level to the tale. The experiences of the principal characters, as well as those of Helen, Braithwaite's ex-wife who gets drawn into this other world in the second novel, represent struggles with their own inner selves. The psychological problems that these people have encountered in their twentieth century lives become manifest in a bizarre way in this fantasy world. The story looks at violence and pacifism, personal power, male dominance and aggression and a number of other contemporary issues, through the struggles which the characters face.

Given the issues covered by this story, I would like to be able to recommend the two books whole heartedly. However, I must say that I found the first half of the first book rather tedious and was tempted to abandon reading it many times. I only persevered because I wanted to review the two books. Yet I did become interested enough to finish the novel, eventually, and was keen to read the second book which turned out to be better than the first. Even this book, however, had a flaw in that the major conflict seemed to need

a speedy resolution but has only been dragged out so that one would need to read the third book to find out what happens. I really can only give a hesitant recommendation here, to those who do not become impatient with themes where the point has already been made and the plot seems to drag a lot. The reader would also need to be comfortable with contemporary feminist issues, and a too clear line between good and evil.

Donna Heenan

**The Last of the Renshai** by Mickey Zucker Reichert.Millenium tpb May 1993 532 pages \$19.95  
ISBN 1-85798-069-7**The Western Wizard** by Mickey Zucker ReichertMillenium hc July 1993 502 pages £14.99  
ISBN 1-85798-108-1

"A man who dies fighting with his principles intact dies in glory. To expect an enemy to follow the same code of honour defiles that honour, reducing it to a set of arbitrary rules". This is the code by which the Renshai live. Dying in battle means acceptance to Valhalla after death. What else is there to live for? The sword is the instrument of their destruction, armour a coward's way of ensuring protection. They are the supreme warriors. Problem is the Renshai have one nasty habit. They mutilate the bodies of the dead and any Northman knows that a mutilated body stops a warrior from reaching Valhalla. And there's a nasty prophesy said about the Renshai. It is the last Renshai who will bring about Ragnarok, the total destruction of the world, the gods and everything! One day, the Northmen join together and attack the Renshai upon their island home, hoping in one massacre to wipe out the Renshai and prevent Ragnarok. Unfortunately, for the Northmen, prophesies are harder to stop than that. Three Renshai remain alive and slowly they begin to fulfil the terms of the prophesy. Thus begins the tale of the last of the Renshai.

Well this is yet another epic fantasy set to go on for book after book. Thankfully Mickey Zucker Reichert is improving her writing skills as she writes this saga - thankfully because the first book is mostly crap. The second book much better. Reichert must learn to keep her characters stereotyped to traditional fantasy characters and not mix them up. The good guys act like bad guys, and the bad guys seem like heroes and when you're writing pre-packaged fantasy you've got to keep your stereotypes exact. It just confuses the reader otherwise.

Conclusion - poor to middling fantasy, improving as the writer gains skill.

Karen Pender-Gunn

**Fossil Hunter** by Robert J Sawyer

Ace pb May 1993 291 pages \$US 4.99  
ISBN 0-441-24884-5

This is the sequel to Far-seer. I have to say I enjoyed this book and not just because it has dinosaurs (who call themselves Quintaglios) as the main characters!

The story follows not long after the ending of Far-seer. Blind Asfan and his mate, Novato, have had their clutch of eggs and all eight have been allowed to live. The tradition is usually the blood-priest kills all but the strongest in each clutch. For the first time, a group of Quintaglios have brothers and sisters and know who their parents are. This is the basis of the story. The intertwining of learning a new family relationship, of discovering differences in Quintaglios, and discovering their past, all provide a very entertaining story.

The story has at least three major sub-plots. One involves Afran's son, Toroca, who is discovering the past of his people. The other involves Afran and the emperor, Dy-Dybo, and some palace intrigue. The last involves the ideas of Quintaglios having brothers and sisters for the first time and the territorial problems this causes. All the stories tie in neatly together, and each moulds and shapes the other, the plots are interconnected in an interesting way.

The ending has the suspicious ring of another book to follow. The story ends on a high note, leading onto unfinished business.

It's not the best book I have ever read, but it is entertaining, easy to read and kept my attention. Reading the first book would be a big help, otherwise the relationships between the characters would be a little foggy and this sequel is strongly dependent on relationships between the characters. An interesting book.

Alan Stewart

**Johnny and the Dead** by Terry Pratchett

Doubleday hc April 1993 173 pages \$17.95  
ISBN 0-385-40301-1

The hero of Only You can Save Mankind, Johnny Maxwell, is back with his pals Wobbler, Bigmac and Yoless. This time Johnny can see and talk to the dead in the local cemetery who get upset when he mentions council plans to redevelop their plots. While researching famous local bodies Johnny comes across Thomas Atkins, the only one from his Pals' Battalion of thirty who didn't die in World War I. He is perhaps the original 'British Tommy'. The dead begin

to use the telephone and the campaign to save the cemetery swings into gear.

Terry Pratchett pokes fun at local authoritarian figures and takes a 'what if ...' and runs with it. Constrained to the same major characters and city as the first novel in the series, he nevertheless manages a creditable diversity with interesting dead people from the past and brief mentions of places abroad.

Aimed at a teenage audience it may even promote interest in library research as Johnny undertakes a project involving historical records. Competent writing, covering some meaningful subjects and entertaining enough to capture the attention. Johnny and the Dead will probably be a success and is recommended for young adult readers.

Nick Price

**Predators** Editors Ed Gorman & Martin H Greenberg

Roc tpb February 1993 382 pages \$US 10.00  
ISBN 0-451-45246-1

This book contains twenty-one short stories that deal predation of man. Most of the stories are set in modern times and almost all in America; many on the west coast. The predation theme seems to have been taken to equate slash murders which is a pity as the stories that stand out are those which challenge this.

There are a variety of stories including those with science fiction, classic mystery, black humor, vampiric, horror with a twist, philosophical and outright gory bents. The range means that you should find something of interest although the variety also means you will find some that are a bit colorless.

There are two stories which stand out as being thought provoking. *Life Near the Bone* is an exploration of an individual's interpretation of the theme of Thoreau as expounded in Walden Pond and it being taken to new extremes. This story is interesting as it is written by a woman and Thoreau was considered by some to have been something of a misogynist.

For myself the outstanding story in this collection is *Mind Slash Matter* by Edward Wellen. This is the longest story in the collection and certainly covers a lot of ground including artificial intelligence, alzheimers disease, nazi war criminals and a murder mystery. It is also the most entertaining story in the collection with a lot of black humor and pokes fun at the hollywood circles.

The latter two stories make it an interesting collection but the variety was too wide to make it a consistently good read.

Karen Pender-Gunn

**The Grail of Hearts** by Susan Schwartz

Pan (Tor) pb April 1993 340 pages \$9.95  
ISBN 0-812-55409

This is the first fantasy novel I have had to review. And it's been interesting, if not entirely pleasant. I am always a little suspicious of books that have pages of rave reviews in the front. It makes me feel I shouldn't criticise a book, no matter how much it deserves it, as all these wonderful people have said it's such a wonderful book. People differ and each person has their own opinion on a book. I wonder if the publishers got as many bad reviews as they did good ones?

Anyway, back to the book. A very slow start to the book. Kundry is ordered by her master, Klingsor, to seduce the holder of the grail in this time, Amfortas. So far, so good. It takes a while for this to happen. Then lo and behold, when Kundry tries to defy her master, she is flung back to her time when she was young, and surprise, surprise, it was during the time of Jesus. Okay, what is it with authors that they have to want to put their own interpretations on the life of Jesus, an examination of faith, a need to put their own theory, just what is it? As is not really surprising, Kundry fails to stop the crucifixion. Back she goes to the time she started from. Now it gets confusing, or should I say more confusing than before. This woman has a thoroughly miserable time of it, mostly because she thinks she is wicked. I would have personally said hang it all and done myself in. What suffering, what pain, what pages of this stuff. 340 pages of suffering and anguish. Just a little too much for me.

It doesn't have a happy ending, or maybe it does. If a release from pain is a happy ending, it has a happy ending. Not a book to read when you are depressed or on a long trip, you might want to throw yourself from the train or plane.

Lindsay Jamieson

**Bazil Broketail** by Christopher Rowley

Roc pb August 1992 476 pages \$US 5.99  
ISBN 0-451-45206-2

There are four main characters in this book - Ralkin, a young man who is companion to Bazil the dragon, and Lessis and Lagdalen who are a senior and apprentice witch respectively. There is some originality in this semi-stark heroic fantasy with some non-human, non-humanoid heroes (Bazil and other dragons) in a dragon-human alliance society that confronts evil monsters.

Bazil is a battledragon physically similar, but mentally different, to the unintelligent (albeit descended from sentient beings) combat dragons of Jack Vance's The Dragon Masters. This novel has a location in it called the Black Mountains which has a similar function to the same named place in Saberhagen's Empire of the East.

An irony one finds quite often with these thick books is that they gloss over certain actions or events. An example here is the campaign against the Teetol. There is a lot of unexplained background that will probably be revealed in sequel volumes. Like the true nature of the leaders of the enemy, the Masters of Padmasa, who are not directly encountered in this novel but only by proxy in the form of their creation the Blunt Doom, their evil servant. We do learn that Death magic (necromancy) is a basis of the Masters' power.

There is realism in the characterisations in that which side a particular individual serves is partly from choice and partly due to circumstance, and the 'good' side has people capable of greed, selfishness, disloyalty, theft, rape and murder. Another strength is that there are strong female characters. Overall this is a workmanlike effort.

Alan Stewart

**Forward the Foundation** by Isaac Asimov

Doubleday hc May 1993 417 pages \$29.95  
ISBN 0-385-26942-0

Asimov's last (?) Foundation book is a collection of five novellas, four of which have already appeared in Asimov's SF magazine. Dealing with Hari Seldon, his family and major associates, it covers forty years of his life and the design to establish the Foundation and Second Foundation. Politics, including his time as First Minister, dealing with Emperors, military juntas and bureaucrats take up much of his time, and indeed the novel. Psychohistory is glossed over as "colored light patterns" generated by the black-box "prime radiant".

It probably comes as no surprise that R Daneel Olivaw is still around, and Asimov even ties in Nemesis, a fairly recent novel which was marketed as independent from his other work. The desire to tie everything up, make sure all the bits of information are imparted results in a dry, didactic text. You'd think with people dying, muggings and societal break down that you'd care for the characters, but you don't. They come across as mannequins speaking lines. Like Seldon this book seems tired and overwrought. You'll get a few intriguing background details, particularly dealing with the Second Foundation, but you won't really enjoy it.

Donna Heenan

**Domes of Fire** by David Eddings

Grafton pb April 1993 584 pages \$12.95  
ISBN 0-586-21313-9

Well Sparhawk is back! That irreverent, disrespectful Pandion Knight is once again deep in trouble, but what could he expect? Married to the Queen Ehlana, with a Goddess for a daughter, what man wouldn't be in trouble? This time however the trouble is the dead armies marching up and down the land. The source of the animated dead seem to be the Troll Gods but how could that be? Surely they are still buried beneath miles of ocean water? And of course it is up to Sparhawk to save the world again.

**Domes of Fire** is the first of a new trilogy dealing with Sparhawk and his friends, once again written in David Eddings' usual amusing style. A decent read demanding nothing of resources or energy, the sort of book you want to read after one of those days at work.

Lin Wolfe

**Shadowrun 7: Into the Shadows**

Edited by Jordan K Weisman

Roc (Penguin) pb May 1993 291 pages \$12.95  
ISBN 0-14-017544-X

The year is 2050. The megacorps control political and economic power, the world currency is the nuyen, cybernetically enhanced street samurai roam the Sprawl, deckers run the matrix. Standard cyberpunk universe, right? Not quite. In the world of Shadowrun something extra has been thrown into the pot - magic! According to ancient Mayan belief a New World is born every 5200 years. The next "awakening" is due in 2011 when magic returns to the world. By 2020 over 10% of the world's population has begun to metamorphose into archetypal elves, dwarves, orks and trolls, and the dragons have returned. Some humans discover the ability to work magic of both the Shamanic and Hermetic schools. It's a fascinating and potent mix where the firepower of corporate wars can include not only cyberware and high tech weaponry but a combat mage or two on the payroll as well.

I'm a big fan of the 'Shadowrun' universe. It's a place I like to visit. However I can't wholeheartedly recommend this book, especially to anyone who hasn't read any of the others in the series or played the role playing game. The quality of the stories is rather uneven (a common problem with many anthologies - glad I'm not an editor) and the opening tale, while quite well written, has such an abrupt ending that I felt the author realised he'd nearly reached his word limit and had better get the damned thing finished.

I may be a bit slow on the uptake, but I was into the third tale in the anthology before I realised there was an overall story taking place rather than a group of discrete short stories. Having made that connection the whole thing made a lot more sense and made for a much more enjoyable read. The actual plot is quite entertaining and convoluted enough to hold interest. The quality of the writing improves as the book progresses so that the end result is basically a satisfying read. There is a useful timeline at the back to fill in some background of the world of 2050, but I feel the inclusion of an index of slang is a little condescending in its implication that readers lack the wit to discern meaning from context.

All in all not a bad book, but far from the best in the series and definitely not the place to start with introducing yourself to the world of 'Shadowrun'.

Karen Small

**Hard Sell** by Piers Anthony

Ace pb May 1993 241 pages \$US 4.99  
ISBN 0-441-31748

When I began to read this novel, I approached it with the idea that if you've read one Anthony, you've read them all. One of the blurbs on the front page describes him as "as facile as he is prolific". According to Chambers, some of the definitions for facile include - "easily persuaded, yielding, mentally weak (short of idiocy) and fluent (usually depreciatory)." I wouldn't have thought this was particularly complimentary and the publishers must have been really desperate to use it.

However, I was pleasantly surprised by the story itself. It was easy to read and, I felt, very reminiscent of many of Heinlein's juveniles. The main character was one who had things happen to him, rather than who caused things to happen. There were no nubile nymphs, but a precocious pre-teen similar in character to Podkayne. The tale is set in the near future. A date is not given, but subtle references to the technology they take for granted sets the scene without overwhelming the plot.

We are taken through various sales jobs Fisk gets when he loses his fortune to a dodgy salesman and his efforts not to work dodgy deals himself. In the process he adopts said pre-teen rather than have her sold in a black market adoption racket. Some parts of the story have been previously printed as shorts in *If* (1972) and *Twilight Zone* (1987).

The other thing that really distinguishes this from other Anthonys is that there is no Author's Note. Unfortunately this means I can't tell you why and when he decided to make this into a novel and what

peculiar or hilarious things were happening in his own life at the time. Instead there is an excerpt from a forthcoming novel called Kilobyte (currently only

available in hardcover, I believe). Altogether I would say that this was very enjoyable light reading. No great thought required, but not 'just another Anthony'.

## Books Received

<i>Non-Stop</i>	Brian Aldiss	Roc	pb
<i>Hard Sell</i>	Piers Anthony	Ace	pb
<i>Forward the Foundation</i>	Isaac Asimov	Doubleday	hc
<i>The Positronic Man</i>	Asimov & Silverberg	Gollancz	hc
<i>The Bug Wars</i>	Robert Asprin	Ace	pb
<i>The Thief of Always</i>	Clive Barker	Fontana	pb
<i>A Million Open Doors</i>	John Barnes	Millenium	hc
<i>Ecstasia</i>	Francesca Lia Block	Roc	tpb
<i>Rediscovery</i>	M Z Bradley & M Lackey	Daw	hc
<i>Athyra</i>	Steven Brust	Ace	pb
<i>Obernewtyn</i>	Isobelle Carmody	Penguin	pb
<i>The Fountains of Paradise</i>	Arthur C Clarke	Gollancz	pb
<i>The Hammer of God</i>	Arthur C Clarke	Gollancz	hc
<i>Nomansland</i>	D G Compton	Gollancz	hc
<i>Ragnarok</i>	Compton & Gribbin	Gollancz	pb
<i>Sign for the Sacred</i>	Storm Constantine	Headline	tpb
<i>Rouse A Sleeping Cat</i>	Dan Crawford	Ace	pb
<i>Warpath</i>	Tony Daniel	Millenium	tpb
<i>Night Threads: Craft of Light</i>	Ru Emerson	Ace	pb
<i>Magician</i>	Raymond E Feist	Grafton	pb
<i>The Last Arabian Night</i>	Craig Shaw Gardner	Ace	pb
<i>Mist World</i>	Simon R Green	Gollancz	pb
<i>Ghatti's Tale 1: Finders-Seekers</i>	Gayle Greeno	Daw	pb
<i>Ghost Beyond Earth</i>	G M Hague	Pan	pb
<i>The Sorcerer's Appendix</i>	Andrew Harman	Legend	pb
<i>A Green Journey</i>	Jon Hassler	Random House	pb
<i>White Queen</i>	Gwyneth Jones	Gollancz	pb
<i>Battletech: Mercenary's Star</i>	William H Keith Jr	Penguin	pb
<i>Crystal Line</i>	Anne McCaffrey	Bantam Press	tpb
<i>Hearts. Hands and Voices</i>	Ian McDonald	Gollancz	pb
<i>6: A Nomad of the Time Streams</i>	Michael Moorcock	Millenium	tpb
<i>7: The Dancers at the End of Time</i>	Michael Moorcock	Millenium	tpb
<i>8: Elric of Melniboné</i>	Michael Moorcock	Millenium	hc
<i>Casablanca</i>	Michael Moorcock	Gollancz	pb
<i>Gloriana</i>	Michael Moorcock	Phoenix	tpb
<i>Wheel of Stars</i>	Andre Norton	Pan (Tor)	pb
<i>The Carpet People</i>	Terry Pratchett	Corgi	pb
<i>The Western Wizard</i>	Mickey Zucker Reichert	Millenium	hc
<i>Red Mars</i>	Kim Stanley Robinson	Grafton	pb
<i>Heart Readers</i>	Kristine Kathryn Rusch	Millenium	tpb
<i>A Sword for a Dragon</i>	Christopher Rowley	Roc	pb
<i>Corridor of Storms</i>	William Sarabande	Bantam	pb
<i>Fossil Hunter</i>	Robert J Sawyer	Ace	pb
<i>Teklab</i>	William Shatner	Pan	pb
<i>Tek Vengeance</i>	William Shatner	Pan	tpb
<i>Zenith</i>	Dirk Strasser	Pan	pb
<i>Sideshow</i>	Sheri S Tepper	Harper Collins	tpb
<i>And Disregards the Rest</i>	Paul Voermans	Gollancz	pb
<i>The Weird Colonial Boy</i>	Paul Voermans	Gollancz	hc
<i>The Martian Inca</i>	Ian Watson	Gollancz	pb
<i>The Hand of Chaos</i>	Weis & Hickman	Bantam	hc
<i>Jaydium</i>	Deborah Wheeler	Daw	pb
<i>Spider World: The Magician</i>	Colin Wilson	Grafton	pb